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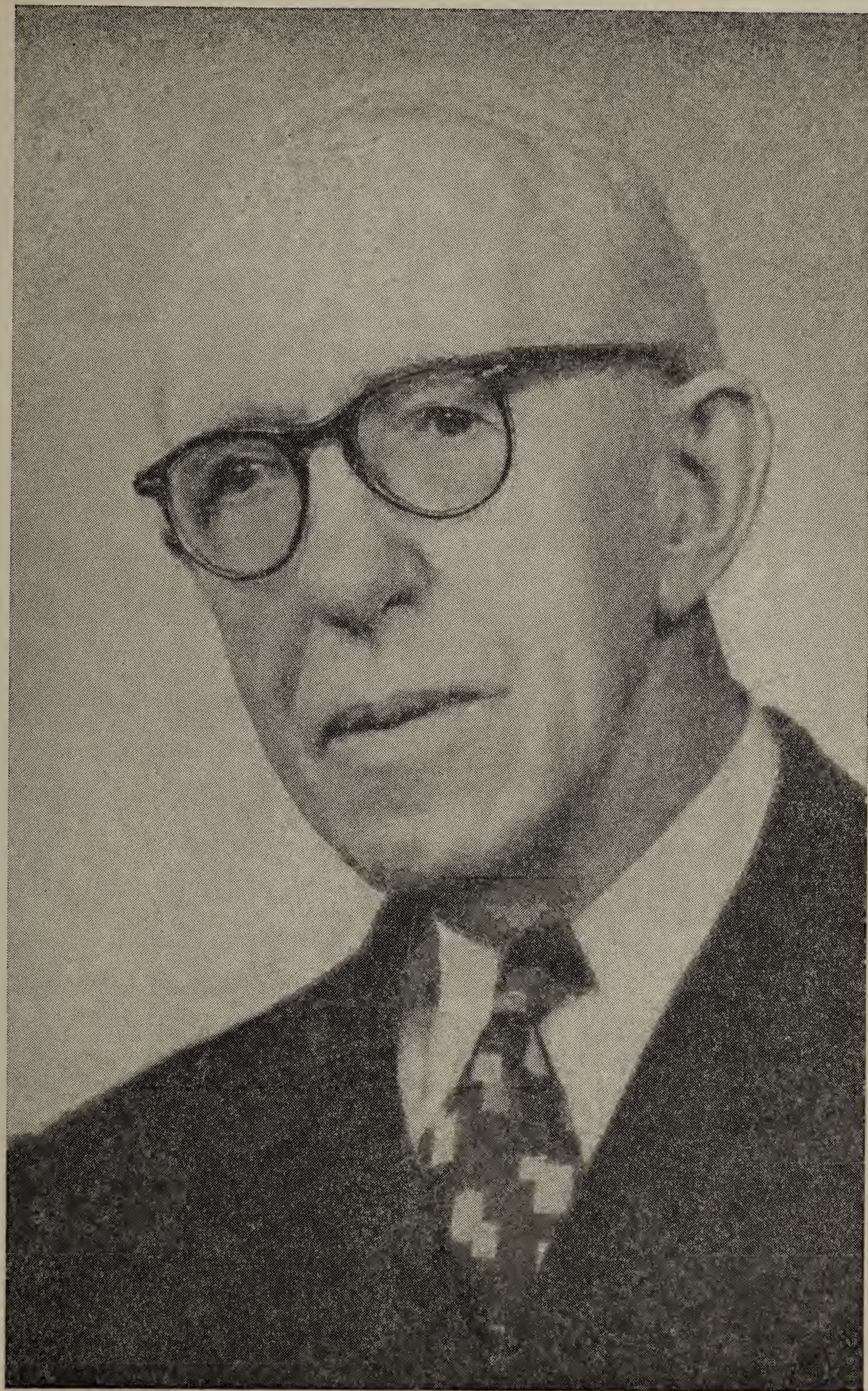
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George D. Haage

My Memoirs . . .



DR. GEORGE D. HAAGE

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Foreword

After numerous requests from many friends and patrons of my series of concerts, who have asked that I write about the artists and musical celebrities who have appeared in Reading during my musical career, I have penned this recollection.

In an humble and modest way I have endeavored to outline the doings and cite the many interesting experiences I have enjoyed, from my early youth to my present days of advanced years.

In this so-called autobiography, I also wish to dedicate my thoughts to the youth of today, the music students and average teen-agers, whose life and mode of living is so different from my own childhood days — certainly very different when compared with the present atomic age.

I respectfully dedicate this brief history to my children and my grandchildren, who may derive some inspiration from these memoirs.

George D. Haage

CHAPTER 1: EARLY LIFE

I was born, the youngest of seven children, on July 3, 1875, in a very remote section of Berks County, Pa., known as Landis Store. My mother, a native of France, had four sons and three daughters. Her maiden name was Mary DeTemple and she came to this country as a child.

My father, George K. Haage, was American-born and was a thrifty Berks County farmer and owner of the farm on which we resided.

I can happily recall my early childhood and the beginning of my interest in music at the age of five. Unfortunately, the opportunity for musical study was denied me, due to the existing circumstances and the disadvantage of being a farm boy. My family as a whole was not musical, but my older sister, Emma, who, due to a mishap, became lame and could not take an active part in the family's farm life, had some musical talent.

Emma's handicap more or less confined her to the house, so our father, in order to offer her some diversion, purchased a parlor organ and engaged a teacher to give her instructions. Our organ, one of the few in the county, aroused considerable interest among our neighboring farmers, and I can recall when these Berks Countians came each Sunday from far and near to see and hear the organ. As a child I was most naturally curious, and began to tamper with the instrument, and in time I discovered that I could play some tunes and little pieces in such a manner that I was asked to play at various functions. How well I can remember that after I had played for one occasion, a collection was taken up for me, and I received the sum of ten cents, which made me very happy.

I began school at the age of five, which is rather early, but the teacher, Amandus Herbst, lived at our house and he saw to it that I got there every day. Even in bad weather and deep snow he took me piggy-back via short cuts across the fields. Those were happy days.

When I was seven years of age, father and mother decided to make a change and moved to a larger farm. Their children were growing up, and the old farm was too small to keep us all occupied. After much investigation and scanning about, father finally decided to move to Douglassville and take over the Flannery farm, which consisted of 250 acres.

Father's idea of a larger farm was well thought out, and we found that there was plenty of work in store for all of us. We kept an average of 35 cows and eight head of horses. Modern farming implements were then unknown, so there was much manual labor involved in all we did. We had milking to do, and as the milk was shipped to Philadelphia daily on the 7 o'clock train, it meant getting up at 4 in the morning to milk the cows and prepare the milk for shipment.

At the age of eight I was obliged to help with this routine and milk my quota of cows each day. We lived on this farm for seven years, and as we children grew older our aspirations pointed toward higher education.

We still possessed the parlor organ and Emma and I continued to entertain ourselves and others on this musical instrument. Mother like music, and when company came on Sunday, I was always asked to play, but invari-

ably I sneaked out of the house so I would not have to perform. Owing to a lack of opportunity I could not further my musical ambitions while living on a farm. However, we children enjoyed many advantages in the country.

Notwithstanding our hard work and long hours, we found time for relaxation in sports such as swimming, baseball, croquet, skating and hunting. My schooling lasted until I was 13, but often I was kept at home to help out with the chores, and I never had the opportunities for high school education. These early years on the farm always bring back fond memories, and I have no regrets about them.

By this time my parents were advancing in years, and farm life was becoming more difficult, so we children persuaded Dad to retire and move to the city. He finally agreed, sold the entire farm stock and we moved to Reading in the spring of 1889. I shall always remember my mother's words at the time of moving when she told us, over and over, that we would regret leaving the farm, because now we would have to purchase all our food.

But things turned out favorably and we were fortunate in securing jobs. Mine was at a fruit and peanut stand at 6th and Penn Streets where I waited on customers, and, on certain days, I peddled bananas and other fruit from house to house. My salary was \$3 per week. I must confess I was not happy with my work, and after a short time secured a job as a clerk in a grocery store at 825 Penn St., at a salary of \$3.50 per week. I liked this better, but the hours were long and tedious. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Mayer, the owner, sold out to Carl Olderp who purchased stock and fixtures, including the clerk. I liked my new boss and the salary which was raised to \$7.50 per week.

Prior to this, Emma returned from Philadelphia where she had been for several years studying music. She brought with her a piano, which aroused anew my interest in music. I had never touched a piano before, and it gave me quite a thrill to inspect it closely. When we moved to Reading, I was much interested in bands, following them whenever possible and wanting very badly to play a cornet. I begged mother to allow me to get one and take lessons from Monroe Althouse, the director of the Germania Band, but she objected "to the noise in the house."

However, my wild dreams were cast aside when she told me I could take piano lessons from Professor Berg. I began immediately, and with enthusiasm.

Due to the long hours in the grocery store (daily from 7 a. m. to 9 p. m. and Saturdays from 5 a. m. to 11 p. m.) I was obliged to practice after store hours and on Sundays. Youth of today, kindly note the working hours. My practicing time was inadequate and difficult, but I kept at it and finally I resigned my position at the grocery store and secured a job at Edward's Music Store, hoping that this might be a means of furthering my music studies.

To my dismay, I found that it worked the other way, since my duties there consisted mostly of cleaning and dusting the many pianos daily. In other words, I became a "jack of all trades." In spite of this, I was deter-

mined to go on, and began studying under Carl Moter. At this time, there was quite a change at the music store.

Mr. Edwards inaugurated a system of giving a certain number of lessons with the sale of each piano and organ. It was a splendid idea, and paid off well by enhancing the sale of instruments and increasing business in general. I was asked to take over the teaching, which relieved me of much of the cleaning. My salary was raised to \$9 per week with the privilege of private teaching as well. Consequently, many pupils whose free lessons became exhausted, expressed a desire to continue further study with me, and my business grew rapidly. Most of my teaching I did after store hours and on Sundays. It was hard work, but I liked it.

CHAPTER 2: TRIP TO EUROPE

The idea of going away to study music always had been uppermost in my mind, but finances stood in my way. I had visited Boston to inquire about the cost of entering the Conservatory there, but Mr. Moter advised me to go to Germany (if I was really serious about the matter) and recommended the Royal Conservatory at Dresden, where he had studied.

It was early in 1898 that the way became clear for me to give up my job at the music store and follow Mr. Moter's suggestion. I had received a catalog from Dresden and found everything to my liking; even the tuition costs were most reasonable. Now I could see that my savings would be sufficient to pay my way for the entire first year, including boat passage and incidental expenses.

I always had turned my entire earnings over to mother, who in return gave me 25¢, and sometimes 50¢ spending money per week. I was happy with it all, because I constantly had the future in mind, and the desire for further musical education. Never will I forget my mother saying to me, "Save your money while you are young." I tried to do just that, denying myself many things in my teen age.

Having completed four years of service at the music store, the time finally arrived when I reluctantly tendered my resignation to my fine employer, Charles W. Edwards.

At last I could satisfy my desire to go to Europe to study music. I secured passage on the German line "Fuerst Bismark," sailing from Hoboken the latter part of August, 1898, just at the time of the conclusion of the Spanish-American War. I can recall very vividly the send-off given me by some of my numerous friends. It was a happy occasion as well as a sad one for me, since I had always lived at home except for some short trips to New York and Boston. The steamer finally pulled out of its dock with its band playing; crowds were cheering, handkerchiefs were waving, and people were calling "bon voyage" to us all.

My handkerchief also served another purpose, but this I need not explain. The voyage was a thrilling experience throughout. The cabin I occupied was shared with three others, two of them being fellow students bound for the Leipzig Conservatory. One was a violinist, the son of a minister; another a pianist, a butcher's son; while the third was a young man by the name of Julius Cohn from New York, who was on his way to Cassel, Germany, to visit his brother who was in the wine business there.

Sailing down New York harbor and out to sea on the first day aboard was most interesting. I enjoyed the meals, the inspection of the ship, and meeting the many types of passengers of various nationalities and personalities.

As the days went on, life aboard became routine. Time, however, did not hang heavy over me as there was the opportunity to enjoy card games and music, which I took advantage of. The "Fuerst Bismark," a ship of 8,500 tons displacement, was not fast, and it took us nine days to reach Cuxhaven, Hamburg, via Southampton, England. My friends and I participated in a

concert aboard ship for the benefit of the Seamen's Fund and it was very successful, both financially and musically.

A strange incident happened when we reached Southampton. Our roommate, Julius Cohn, expected his brother to meet him at this port, but he failed to show up. Julius was indeed in trouble, because he was short of funds, and could not make the trip from Hamburg to Cassel without money. I took pity on him, and loaned him the necessary amount. He was such a nice chap that I took a chance. He promised to pay me just as soon as he had my Dresden address, which I forwarded him immediately after I got settled. However, I failed to hear from him, and as time went on I became concerned and began to think I had misjudged his honesty. But three months later I had a real surprise when the letter carrier brought me my money, and by express came a case of Rhine wine. A letter of apology followed, and all was well between Julius and me.

Arriving at Hamburg, Germany, after 9 days spent on the water it felt mighty good to be on land again. The "Fuerst Bismark" had docked at Cuxhaven where we boarded a train to Hamburg. I remained over in Hamburg for a day and put up for the night at the Bismark Hotel where I met quite a number of Americans, including Albert Stanley, whom I remembered as being the head of the Music Department of the Ann Arbor, Michigan, School of Music. Its present director is Dr. Charles A. Sink, a very good friend of mine. It was quite a privilege to make the acquaintance of such a personality as Albert Stanley.

I shall have more to say about him later on in my memoirs. My first impression of Germany was a most favorable one and I found the people very courteous. My Berks County Dutch served me well and I was able to converse in the German language, even surprising myself at my aptitude in the matter. I remained a few days in Hamburg, visiting many places of interest before departing for Dresden, which was to become my home during my study years.

I went by way of Berlin where I also remained over for two days, attending my first opera, "Mignon" by Thomas, which needless to say was a revelation to me and which thoroughly whetted my appetite for the similar treats which awaited me in Dresden. Dresden was noted for its outstanding operas, which were considered the finest in all Europe in those days.

CHAPTER 3: DRESDEN, A NEW HOME

I arrived in Dresden finally, after a four hour train ride from Berlin. My baggage and bicycle were awaiting me there, and my next order of business was to find a place to live. I immediately looked up the Conservatory, and the secretary there found a room for me on Stein Strasse with a Mrs. Schneider. She was a lovely, motherly person and did everything to make me feel at home and happy.

Naturally, everything was strange and so different and I must confess that I felt somewhat homesick, but I had to make the best of it, and I was glad to have found a place I could call my home for the time being. My room was not too large but it was comfortable and I felt satisfied. It was on the fourth floor with a winding stone stairway leading to it. A bad feature was that I had to pass through the kitchen to enter my room.

Well, being settled I started to unpack my belongings and also my bike which was crated. I found it in perfect shape, so I immediately started to explore the city, but didn't get far before an officer hailed me and made me get off the bike. He gave me a terrific bawling out, censuring me for riding on a street where bicycles were prohibited. He had me scared for the time, but suddenly became very friendly and advised me to buy a map of the city to acquaint myself with the traffic laws. I did just that and all was well, until another occasion when I again was stopped by another gendarme who told me that bicycles without brakes were not permitted in Germany.

So, I next had a brake put on my front wheel, a small foot brake which I discovered soon afterwards also was illegal. However, this warning I ignored and went ahead using the foot brake and got by with it nicely. But, to return to Frau Schneider and my room with board.

The meals were typically German. Breakfast consisted of a roll and coffee; lunch at about 10 consisted of a rye-bread sandwich and fruit in season. We had no butter, but goose fat was used. For dinner it was customary to have potatoes or rice with slabs of boiled beef topping it off.

It was very hard for me to become accustomed to this fare, so I decided to have only breakfast served with my room and to take my other meals out, especially at noon, and then to prepare my own supper which was very simple for me. I would have bread and butter on hand and purchase some various kinds of cold cuts such as bologna. I found a butcher shop just around the corner from my residence where I took a liking to the hamburgers which I spied in the window. I laid in a supply, and although they were cold I relished them very much, and with a bottle of beer, known as "Einfaches" I really had some good meals.

I told a friend of mine about the hamburgers and told him I found them at a shop called "Ross Fleisher," and also that I had been eating them for some time and how good they were. To my great surprise I was told that the "Ross Fleisher" (the latter word meaning butcher in German) was a horse butcher, "Ross" meaning horse.

I unknowingly had been eating horse meat all the while. Well, it is needless to say that my appetite was gone, for the time being at least, until I

found the real thing in the hamburger line. However, I decided that I would try and find another place to live, and where I could have full board with my room.

Walking along the street one day I saw the sign, "Moebeliertes Zimmer zuvermieten," or furnished room for rent. I went to the second floor and rang the bell. An old gentleman immediately recognized me as being an American and addressed me in English.

He told me he had lived in Memphis, Tennessee, for a number of years. I asked about the rate for room with board, which as I recall was most reasonable. Mr. Caro, which was the man's name, insisted that I must live with his family, even if I could not pay anything at all. Of course, I refused to hear of that.

The room was magnificent, and I was delighted at being fortunate enough to live with such a lovely family. I immediately secured a Bluethner Grand piano for my practice, and I was most happy to think that I could now get down to real hard work and practice. But as the saying goes, true love never runs smooth, and this surely was an example. After I had settled down to my first day's practice, playing my scales, I was disturbed by a bumping on the floor above me, but gave it little thought. However, the same bumping occurred again the next day, and on the days following, and this naturally unnerved me greatly. Mr. Caro came to me and informed me that the landlady above me could not tolerate my practicing due to her nervous condition.

My first thought was to again find another place where I could practice to my heart's content, and without the fear of disturbing anyone. Mr. Caro and I discussed the matter thoroughly and compromised by having my piano moved into the family's living room, which was away from the landlady's living room and might not annoy her. This plan worked out to her pleasure, but not quite to my liking.

I was obliged to do much of my work at the piano in the presence of the family, which was not too satisfactory but I managed to get along for over a year, until I felt that I had better find another room where I could do as I pleased. The Caros were very nice about the whole matter and approved my taking this important step. I was almost heartbroken over having to give up the fine home and above all, the loss of my grand piano.

I found another nice family by the name of Wieszorek on Kalbach Strasse, where I had a nice room, but small, so that I had to content myself with an upright piano. I had my breakfast and dinner served in my room, while I usually took my suppers out or prepared something for myself, but without the "Ross Fleisher's" hamburgers. My friendship with the Caros continued as before, and I spent many happy moments there up to the day of my departure for home.

CHAPTER 4: THE CONSERVATORIUM

My admission to the Conservatorium presented no hardship. I had to play for my audition, and for this I chose the first of the Mendelssohn "Song Without Words," in E major. I had to undergo ear tests, which revealed that I possessed the rare gift of absolute pitch. I was told that I was the fourth of 1,200 students to be so fortunate.

These tests were not absolutely necessary for admission to the school, but rather were designed to stipulate the grade for assignment to the classes. I found all this very interesting, in spite of some nervousness which bothered me quite a bit.

I chose the piano for my main subject, and, of course, other side studies were compulsory. These comprised two lessons each week in piano, harmony and choral classes and sight singing. I completed my harmony ahead of schedule, being promoted after my examinations in the summer of 1899. I then took up counterpoint and fugue in which I also advanced rather quickly. In the second year at the conservatory I was also admitted to the main choral body, which meant one more lesson per week. I was next obliged to join the ensemble classes, doing some trio and quartet playing as well as accompanying. This was most interesting to me, especially when I got the assignment to serve as accompanist for Madam Orgeni.

Through this affiliation I had the opportunity to meet many of the vocal celebrities who were pupils of Madam Orgeni. With this appointment, and all of the aforesaid duties, I managed to keep myself very busy, in fact so much so that I found less time for my practice than I should liked to have had. Vacations there were aplenty, and I was always glad when they came around. For instance: At Christmas, ten days, with the same at Whitsuntide, and then the summer vacation which lasted for four weeks.

On my second night in Dresden I went scouting about the city, and finally came to the Opera House where I looked over the programs and there met a young Englishman who was most happy to meet someone who could speak English. His name was George Woodhouse, who came from Cradely Heath near Birmingham, England.

He told me that he also was a pupil at the Conservatory, studying with Dr. Tyson Wolf. We became staunch friends, and he invited me to the Pensionat where he had his room and where I met many other English and Americans. He immediately coaxed me to also take a room there where English was spoken almost exclusively. I refused, stating that I preferred to live with German people in order to further my knowledge of the language. I was so glad that I persisted in this matter for my mastery of the German language has meant much to me throughout the years.

Woodhouse never did master German very well. However, he was quite a fine chap and our friendship and correspondence kept up for the many years until his untimely death two years ago. Woodhouse, or Woody, as we all knew him, was a fine pianist and musician and became one of the outstanding personalities in his profession in England.

Among the roomers at Mrs. Balke's Pensionat on Marshall Strasse, Dresden, was a young man from Berlin, Paul Haberecht, who also became a very good friend of mine. He was not a music student, but lived at the Balke Pensionat in order that he might mingle with the English speaking boarders to further his knowledge of our language.

His family was very wealthy, had a magnificent home in Berlin and I spent many of my vacations there. I practically became one of the family and was treated as such. Herr Haberecht, the father, had passed away some years before, so I never knew him, but the mother, Frau Haberecht, was a grand person and did everything in the world for me. At times I became much embarrassed to think that I was associating with people who were far beyond my social standing. Paul was the oldest of the family of five children, and a governess by the name of Marie Greulich took care of the youngsters.

The family, including Fraulein Greulich, often visited Dresden to see Paul, and I was always invited to join them at their hotel, or to go on excursion trips, and I always was invited to attend the opera with them. As a poor American student I certainly appreciated this courtesy.

My visits to Berlin were made even more pleasant for me. I was always met at the station by their coachman, then taken to a theatre or opera and winding up with a dinner party or some such social event.

I felt rather embarrassed many times, thinking that I was imposing on their hospitality. I often made all sorts of excuses trying to avoid a trip to Berlin, but all to no avail, as a railroad ticket was sent to me. The family also had a beautiful summer home at Lubmin on the Baltic Sea, where I also was a guest in the summer of 1899.

CHAPTER 5: 1,300 MILES BY BIKE

I had taken my bicycle to Europe with me and consequently had planned a trip to coincide with my stay at the Baltic. There were many incidents on this bicycle trip which are worth recalling. Paul Haberecht joined me with his bike for a part of my trip of 1,300 miles. I had three objects in mind which prompted the trip.

They were first to call on my two former cabin mates aboard ship, who were studying at the Leipzig Conservatory, and then to pay a visit to the family of Carl Olderp, by whom I had been employed in the grocery store in Reading before accepting the position at the Charles Edwards Music Store. And then finally I planned to visit the Haberechts at Lubmin where I remained for a week before turning south on my return trip to Dresden.

Paul and I left Dresden on Sunday morning, July 3, (my birthday) after I attended mass at the Hofkirche. Our objective on the first day was Leipzig, a distance of about 75 miles. Going was very good until we unfortunately ran head-on into a rain storm at a little town called Kuehren, some 15 miles from our destination. We stayed at a country hotel for the night and most of the next day before the weather finally became clear so we could proceed. We remained at Kuehren for the second night in order to catch up with some sleep which was denied us on the first night due to a celebration which went on for practically the entire night. This was an experience to be remembered.

We finally got underway again and arrived at Leipzig early on our third day out and immediately went to the Conservatory in search of my student friends from Providence, R. I.

Our efforts to locate the boys were all in vain, and we finally gave up. In the evening Paul and I went to a vaudeville performance, and lo and behold, who did we run into there but the boys we were hunting during the day. To say the least, it was a happy reunion and a celebration, too, which lasted into the wee hours of the morning.

Later in the day, after looking the city over, we left for our next destination, Halle, which too is a most interesting city, and only several hours by bike from Leipzig.

After remaining there for the night, Paul and I parted as he had planned a trip to the island of Ruegen for a vacation before meeting me at Lubmin. From then on, I did my pedaling alone. Although lonesome, I managed very well as there were so many interesting sights along the way. The roads were in excellent shape, reminding me of the old turnpikes in this country. I encountered very few hills that I could master without dismounting. I arrived at a town called Friedland on a very hot day, and stopped there for a few hours for lunch and a rest. Later, rested and refreshed, I started on my way, but had the misfortune of puncturing my tire. I had all the tools to take care of just such a mishap, but I was not very successful in using them, and how I perspired trying to keep the tire pumped up. I could not find a place to have the tire repaired, nor could I find a tire, so I kept on going as best I could during the hot day and at last my prayers were answered when I

found a bicycle store where there actually was a tire to fit my wheel. I felt greatly relieved and was able to continue on my journey to Neustrelitz, where the Olderp family resided.

The mother and two daughters had visited in this country during the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, so that I knew them quite well. The father, who had passed away before my visit, had held a very high position as treasurer of the Province of Neustrelitz.

I was obliged to stay at the home of the Olderps for four days. I was royally entertained while there, attended concerts and parties given in my honor. I was even introduced to the members of the royal family, and I also met Kochat, the famous composer of Vienna, who gave a concert there with his quintet. This was a rare treat.

All in all, I again felt quite out of place among such celebrities. I was happy, however, that I could adapt myself to the conditions at hand. I finally reached Lubmin, which I found to be a delightful spot. I was again well received by the Haberechts, and I went bathing in the Baltic every day. There were several other friends of the family by the name of Dressler who also were guests there. The two sons, both lieutenants in the army, I had met frequently in Berlin.

Father Dressler was proprietor of a large wine establishment and was quite well-to-do. These boys were marvellous chaps and we enjoyed many bicycle trips together while at the shore. One day we decided to undertake a trip to one of the larger resorts along the Baltic called Swuenemunde.

There were four of us in the party, including the two Dresslers, Paul's brother, Hans, and myself. We had a delightful time, but on our return trip Willy Dressler had a mishap with his bike, snapping off one of his pedals. We were in a quandary as to how Willy was to get home. Of course it took me to solve the problem.

I offered my services by hitching my suspenders to his handlebars and by dragging him some twenty-odd miles. While it was some job, I did it. They happened to be familiar with the phrase, "let George do it". With it all, it was great fun.

The time arrived when I was obliged to bid everyone goodbye, but the family begged me to remain longer and were quite reluctant to let me go even after I convinced them that I had to be back at the Conservatory for my exams in August. I had some 700 miles to pedal back, so I needed time for it.

I returned via Rostock, Stralsund and Dannenberg. At the latter city I had to cross the river Elbe, not far from Hamburg, when I encountered a stubborn cow on the long bridge. I was delayed because of this miserable beast. Arriving at Dannenberg too early to turn in for the night, I decided to ride on and take advantage of the beautiful weather, for prior to this I had ridden in some miserable and windy weather which was not so pleasant.

After several hours of travelling, I came to the notorious Lueneberger Heide, of which I had been warned that it was unsafe due to bandits and bad men who loitered therein. This is a very large forest and quite realistic as it had been pictured to me. It was getting late in the evening and I was too far on my way to turn back, so I picked up courage and continued into the

dense woodland, thinking that perhaps I should be able to reach some place where I could stay over for the night.

In this I was much disappointed. The road was very good and with the aid of my bicycle lamp I managed to get along, but there was no end to the forest and I became scared, with all sorts of thoughts running through my head. I was told in advance that I should carry a revolver, just in case. I carried a permit from the Dresden police, and consequently the gun, which served as a companion; and believe me it kept me feeling at ease while passing through the forest.

It became later and later, and I thought I would never see daylight again. Finally, I heard a horse's footsteps and my heart jumped into my mouth, not knowing what was approaching me. I soon discovered that a man was driving toward me, and I stopped and inquired as to where I was. He told me that I was near the open again, and that I would find a Gasthaus, or country inn, just a short distance ahead, where I could be taken care of for the night.

The proprietress was most kind to me and did everything to make me feel at home. After a good night's rest I was ready to be on my way, but the dear lady wanted me to stay over longer because she felt so highly honored to have an American as a guest. Of course she could not prevail upon me to stay for the same reasons I stated before, getting back to Dresden in time for my exams. This is just another example of how the Germans idolized Americans. There were exceptions to this, however, depending upon the American himself.

I continued on to Celle where there was a large military post, and where I recall running into a severe storm and rode right through it, taking a good ducking which did me no harm. I arrived at Hanover early in the evening and put up for the night at a small hotel, managed by a former sea captain who also was pleased to have me stay at his hostelry. I remained in this beautiful city for two days because there was so much to see. Another reason for my staying over was that I encountered rain again. I also had a mishap with my bike, breaking one of the pedals, which I was able to have repaired.

I must give an account of a very embarrassing incident which occurred to me, mostly due to some extra expense incurred through the mishap to the pedal, shoe mending and other unexpected expenses not provided for in my budget.

I ran short of cash, which placed me in a quandary. Herr Caro, my landlord in Dresden, told me not to hesitate in wiring him for cash in case I should run short. I hated to resort to this, so during one of the many conversations with the hotel proprietor (the sea captain) I stated my predicament, and he immediately asked me how much money I needed to get back to Dresden. He offered to loan me any amount I wanted. I told him I would accept his generosity providing he would take my watch for security. He refused my offer, saying that my face was so honest looking that he felt he was taking no chances. We finally compromised and he accepted my watch, and agreed to send it to me as soon as I reached home. If I can recall cor-

rectly, I think it was 25 marks he loaned me. I was really amazed that I, as a total stranger, was trusted.

The amount was small, but ample to get me back to Dresden, providing I should be spared any other unforeseen expenses. Fortunately, I got through without more troubles. Upon my return to Dresden I sent the money to Herr Shultz, and received my watch in return.

On July 31, the rain ceased and I was able to get away from Hanover and on my way again. I had some very nice roads and scenery to Gottingen, the famous university town. It was a most interesting place, and I put up there for the night. The next day I rode on to Eisenach, which was made famous through Wagner's opera, "Tannhauser."

There I visited the Wartburg where I saw the ink spot on the wall which was supposed to have been made by Martin Luther, who, in one of his fits of rage, cast a bottle of ink at the Devil. Such is the legend. There was nothing to interest me further in the town, so I continued my journey to the city of Erfurt.

This was one of the finest cities I visited on my entire trip. A magnificent Dom (cathedral), post office and City Hall (Rathaus) were outstanding in appearance. I spent but a short time there, and went on to Weimer, famed as the home of the great Franz Liszt, whose house was still standing and had been turned into a museum. It is needless to say that I was much impressed by this musically historic city. I also saw the Goethe and Schiller monuments, which are beautiful.

I arose early, at 6 to be exact, taking in more of the interesting sights in this classical city before departing for Yena, where the battle of Yena was fought in 1808 between the French, under Napoleon, and the Prussians.

I next passed through Gera and Altenberg, both very large cities, which also had many outstanding and historic places. On my last night out, I stayed in a small town called Roeslitz, and left the next morning at 7, via Doeblin and Meissen, where the world famous china is made, then on to Tetch, where I found the Caro family awaiting me.

I rode on to Dresden in the afternoon of August 4, to bring to an end a tour which I shall never forget. Travelling some 1,300 miles, I passed through the following cities: Kühren, Leipzig, Halle, Rrandenberg, Magdeberg, Friedland, Nauen, Neustrelitz, Greifswald, Lubmin, Stralsund, Rostock, Schwerin, Dannenberg, Celle, Hanover, Goetingen, Eisenach, Gotha, Erfurt, Weimer, Gera, Altenberg, Doebln, Meissen, Tetch, and Dresden. Of course, many other small towns and villages I have passed up, but one could write books about most of the cities visited, for their many historic spots, beautiful churches and castles.

CHAPTER 6: BACK TO DRESDEN

Having now returned in my narrative to the city of Dresden, I shall endeavor to give a brief description of it. A city of 650,000 it is situated on the river Elbe. Dresden is divided by the river into the old and new cities, known as Altstadt and Neustadt. Altstadt is the larger of the two, and is where all the museums are located at the Zwinger Teich, as well as the Hofkirche, Opera, Conservatory and the famous Brilliante Terasse, a most beautiful promenade along the Elbe where one could enjoy the concerts during the summer season by the Trenkler orchestra.

Of course, there was, like all such places, a beer garden connected with it, where one could sit around tables and enjoy the soothing music and the excellent beer which plays such an important part in German life.

The river Elbe is very interesting with its commercial boats, propelled by submerged cables similar to the cables one used to see in New York, pulling the cable cars. Then, too, there were the delightful pleasure steamers plying daily during the summers between Dresden and nearby resorts, such as Pillnitz, where the summer palace of the Royal Family was located. And then there were excursions to the Saechsische Schweiz (Saxon Switzerland). I had the pleasure of taking many of these trips.

The Hofkirche or the Royal Church which I attended was so called because the Royal Family was Catholic, and is one of the outstanding sights in the city. It was a very large edifice, but still too small to accommodate the vast crowds who attended the 11 o'clock High Mass, primarily to hear the music and get a glimpse of the royalty who usually appeared at a large window just above the main altar.

The music naturally was of a high standard, rendered by a fine choir of boys and men and accompanied by an orchestra comprised of members of the Opera House orchestra. The soloists were also singers from the opera. I heard many of the great masses by Mozart, Schubert, Haydn, Bruckner and others.

These great works, while gorgeous in their rendition, would not be tolerated today, but were thoroughly enjoyed by the many visitors who undoubtedly went to church only to hear the music. The Hofkirche was the only Catholic church in Dresden at the time. While the Royal Family was Catholic, the Kingdom of Saxony was predominately Protestant, which meant that there were numerous churches of all denominations.

Dresden had a section known as the English quarter, and another known as the American, and each possessed its own church. During my time in Dresden there were many English and Americans residing there, and mostly for the cultural and musical atmosphere, since Dresden was not a commercial city.

Aside from the opera, Dresden had quite a few orchestras which gave the usual series of concerts. The Gewerbehaus, and the Opera House were the foremost. As students, we were supposed to attend as many of these and other musical events as possible.

The Opera House orchestra, under the direction of Ernst Von Schuch, gave two series of six concerts each, one with soloists and the other entirely orchestral. I recall buying my subscription for 3 marks, or 12 cents, for each concert. We also had the privilege of buying tickets to artist recitals at a discount. Our Conservatory had its own orchestra of 80 players, but it appeared mostly at the commencement concerts.

An event which I always looked forward to was the annual rendition of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, given at the Opera House on Palm Sundays by the combined choruses of the Conservatory and the Opera House.

Herr Von Schuch was the conductor, and it was a privilege to sing under such a celebrity and to take part in such a work as the Ninth of Beethoven. The subscription concerts presented many of the world's greatest artists. Among those whom I saw and heard were Josef Hofman, Harold Bauer, Paderewski and Emil Sauer, pianists. Mme. Schuman-Heink, Sembrich, Perron, Schedemantel, Ludwig Wuellner and Frau Reuss-Belche, wife of one of my piano teachers, who came to America during my stay in Dresden to give concerts and make some appearances at the Metropolitan Opera. She was accompanied by her husband.

Among the famous violinists whom I heard were Fritz Kreisler, Willy Hess and Petri. This is mentioning but a few of the many I had the opportunity of hearing, and little did I think at the moment that most of these artists would at some time or other appear here in Reading under my auspices.

There were also concerts by numerous chamber music groups, trios, quartets and other ensembles. One of my piano teachers, Percy Sherwood, was the pianist in one of these trios which gave a series of concerts annually. I felt highly honored when Mr. Sherwood asked, during one of my lessons, whether I would be willing to turn pages for him at these recitals. I gladly accepted, because it gave me the rare opportunity of meeting many of the artists, and because the king and members of the royal family attended the concerts quite regularly, and always were seated in the front row of the hall near the stage where I could get a good look at them. What a thrill this was for me, a young American student!

I must say I became quite popular in amateur musical circles in Dresden, by virtue of being an accompanist in the studio of Mme. Orgeni. One of the princesses, who was a pupil at the studio, gave a recital at Hotel Sengig and I was chosen to do the accompanying for her. Was I nervous? Yes. But who wouldn't be under such circumstances?

However, I got through the ordeal pretty well. Other opportunities to mix in musical circles came. The Caro family, with whom I resided for a while, belonged to a choral group, Riesen's Liedergarten, and for several years I was their accompanist, and finally the assistant conductor to Herr Riesen. I served in these capacities until I left Dresden to return home.

A beautiful hand painted diploma graces the wall of my studio, and it was presented to me in appreciation of my services.

At the Conservatory I was granted a free scholarship in voice, of which, of course, I also took advantage. Neither of the affiliations mentioned did me

any harm, but on the contrary, they fared me well in my later efforts to become established in the musical field at home. Through the kindness of my teacher, Mr. Sherwood, I was able to meet many of the celebrities at the Sunday afternoon teas where music played an important part.

What a thrill to meet so many of the great ones, and to hear them perform. I recall that at one of these events Frau Wedekind, of the operas, was slated to give a group of Brahms Lieder, but due to a slight cold she feared to venture these songs. She agreed, however, to sing them, providing one of the pianists present would transpose them for her. Mr. Sherwod accepted the challenge and played them one-third lower. Everyone knows that Brahms is difficult enough in the original key, and very difficult into any other key.

But Mr. Sherwood did it and was accorded an ovation. I thought it was too wonderful to be true. On another occasion, at one of the Conservatory concerts, a trumpet player from the army was on the program, but had no arrangement for the piano accompaniment, only the band score. Edward Reuss volunteered to play it, and what an achievement it turned out to be!

CHAPTER 7: FOUR YEARS PASS

Dresden has many beautiful parks, the main one being the Grosser Garten with its magnificent shrubbery, walks and driveways where I could take daily spins on my wheel during the summer days. In the winter there was the lovely Carola Lake where I skated. The countryside surrounding Dresden also was very beautiful, and on Sundays I usually accompanied the Caros on an afternoon jaunt, taking the trolley for some distance then walking through the woods to some park where the military bands gave their concerts. These were always a treat.

An example of real German Gemuetlichkeit was to be had on these occasions, eating your lunch and sipping a glass of beer, not gulping it down as we do here in America. Another prominent feature of German life occurred in the spring of the year when the various fruit trees were in blossom. It seems that the entire population of the city was out enjoying the sight, known there as Baumbluet.

As time rolled on I became quite acclimated to German life and customs. I often felt the longing for dear old Reading and my home, but the letters received from home always had a tendency to cheer me up. Sister Emma very often sent me the newspapers from home which I sometimes read over and over again. Quite often she also sent me pretzels and peanuts and all of this was heartily appreciated.

One day I received a letter which stated that she was planning to visit me, and this was the best news ever. The time finally came when I received word from Hamburg that she had landed there and would arrive in Dresden at such and such an hour, where I was to meet her at the railway station.

She brought a travelling companion by the name of Mrs. Weiss with her, and, of course, I had rooms for both of them in the same house where I lived. It made things very convenient, since we could all have our meals together.

I arranged numerous sightseeing trips for them, including a two weeks excursion to south Germany, Munich, Switzerland and the Rhine tour. These were most interesting to all of us.

At a later time my sister and I, (without Mrs. Weiss) took another journey, this time to Prague, Vienna and many interesting spots along the Danube River. Sister spent about three months in Europe and I tried my best to show her a pleasant time. All my friends in Dresden entertained her, and she was fairly idolized everywhere we visited. Naturally I had to bring her to Berlin where the Haberechts wanted to fete her. We deferred the visit until the time arrived for her departure for home, since that would entail only one trip, via Berlin to Hamburg to board the steamer.

Well the Haberechts treated my sister and me royally. Many other guests were there, including the Dresslers, who had the wine establishment on Alte Jacob Strasse in Berlin, and the two lieutenants whom I mentioned as being at Lubmin during my stay there. The dinner served was not just a dinner, but a banquet of the first order, with plenty of the good wines from the Dressler establishment.

Everything was done up in real Haberecht style, and all to do honor to George's sister. The next day I accompanied my sister and Mrs. Weiss to the station and the time came to say goodbye. It happened to be one with many tears shed. It was a sad parting, but later what grand recollections we had of the several months we spent so happily together in Germany.

I felt quite happy, however, that I had carefully planned everything to her liking, and that she took with her some wonderful impressions of Germany and the German people, who were surely most kind to her at all times. After seeing her off to Hamburg, I remained for several days with the Haberechts to enjoy more of their hospitality.

I returned to Dresden and to my studies, and soon reconciled myself to the work at hand which had been somewhat neglected during my sister's visit. Time passed quickly, and it was not too long until I had to think of my final days in Dresden, and of preparations for my trip to America and home, family and friends. I spent four years in Germany, three of them at the Conservatory, and after receiving my *Entlassungszeugnis* (diploma) I spent the last year doing piano work with Mr. Sherwood.

During my final years I had occasion to appear in a number of concerts as accompanist and pianist. I recall one concert given at the hall in Weiser Hirsch, Loesschwitz, a suburb of Dresden, when the critic of the *Dresdener Anzeiger* gave me quite a laudable write-up. He stated that I was a young pianist from Philadelphia.

The numbers I played consisted of the "Moonlight Sonata," a group of Grieg pieces, the C Sharp Scherzo of Chopin and the Rubinstein "Staccato Study," and three encores, including the "Narcissus" of Ethelbert Nevin, which, it seemed, had never been heard in Dresden before. It was well-liked apparently, and the large Klemm Music House, where I bought all my music, immediately stocked it. I was told later that there was a large demand for the number. I was credited with introducing it to Germany, which may or may not be the case, nevertheless I let it rest at that.

In July of 1902 I secured my ticket for passage home on the "Friederick der Grosse" which I was to board at Southampton, England. A friend of mine by the name of Bixel, who was also a student at the Conservatory, likewise secured passage on the same steamer, and I was very glad to have company.

My departure from Dresden was also a rather sad affair, due to the many friends whom I had to leave behind me, especially the Caro family with whom I had resided and by whom I always had been treated as one of the family. Mr. Caro always held me up before his sons as an example because I always attended church, while, he said, his sons never went to their synagogue. There were many friends at the station to see me off, and I was showered with all sorts of gifts to remember them by.

Naturally I had to go to Berlin where the Haberechts also gave me a wonderful send-off. A jeweler was there with a tray of rings and I was told to take my choice. I could not refuse, so I selected a snake ring with beautiful settings of precious stones. I prized this highly and wore it for many

years, until very recently, when it disappeared. What happened to it I shall never know. It's gone.

Well, my departure from Berlin was also at hand, and Mrs. Haberecht asked whether I needed money to see me through. She was very sincere in offering me the money, and although I refused, I really could have used it as I later learned.

I left Berlin on my long journey, and traveled via Cologne and Aachen to Ostend, where I boarded the channel steamer for Dover, England. While crossing the channel, I met two young Hungarian men who were on their way to London, which was also my immediate destination. They invited me to have lunch with them, and this gave us an opportunity to become acquainted. They were mere youngsters from Budapest, and interested in horses, and were headed for Epsom Downs, the famous English race course.

They knew no English, but spoke German fluently. On the train from Dover to London they asked me whether I wouldn't stay with them as interpreter, and that they would pay me well.

My purpose for coming to London in the first place was to visit Mabel Yates, another Sherwood pupil, who lived in Liverpool. I was invited to remain a week at her home. Her family was very wealthy, her father being president of a large Liverpool bank. I told the Hungarian boys about my plans and that I had scheduled my visit to the Yates home and that I could hardly afford to disappoint them. However, after considerable coaxing, I decided to remain with the boys for the day, providing I could wire the Yates family that they could expect me at a later time.

The second and third days were similar, as again I wired them when they might expect me. In the meantime, the boys showed me a wonderful time in London, taking me to the theatres, dinners in the fine restaurants, and on sightseeing trips, in addition to paying all my expenses while I was with them. They were loaded with cash, as I had observed while we were crossing the Channel. My last day with them was spent on a trip to Epsom Downs, which was their objective in coming to England.

We went there by automobile, which, by the way, was my first auto ride. They paid 100 shillings rental for that trip, including the driver, another sign that the boys had money galore. On second thought, I was really glad that I had met these Hungarian lads, for their paying my expense while in London was a great help to me, since I was running short of cash.

I finally reached Liverpool, unfortunately curtailing my stay there by several days. However, I found the Yates family simply wonderful. They lived in a magnificent home and most graciously accepted my apologies for delaying my arrival.

Nevertheless, the several days I had left to spend with them were very enjoyable. They had parties arranged in my honor and I had the pleasure of meeting some very fine people while there.

I left Liverpool the day before I had to board the steamer. I arrived at Southampton in the evening and secured a room in a private house overnight. I could not afford the expense of a hotel as my funds were very, very low. I stepped into a restaurant to enjoy one more of those delicious English

steaks, and who came along but my friend Bixel, who seemed somewhat downcast.

He had just come from Paris where he had seen the operas, and he lamented that he was dead broke. I sympathized with him by stating that I happened to be in the same predicament. We had enough between us to settle the bill for our meals, and having our steamer tickets we felt quite safe in reaching New York.

Boarding the ship the next day we found that "Frederick the Great" was a very large boat. As we got under way we were concerned about what we should do about tipping when we left the boat in New York. The trip was not a pleasant one since we had much rough weather on the voyage. I can recall that I missed many of the meals due to that damnable *mal de mer*.

CHAPTER 8: VAGABOND'S RETURN

We arrived in New York after nine days on the ocean. About the tipping, we could do nothing, sorry to say, since we were broke. As we landed and got cleared through the customs, whom did we meet on the dock but my sisters Emma and Rosa. Mr. Bixel and I were both happy to be back in the dear U. S. A., but we turned our thoughts back to Germany and the wonderful days spent there, and the wonderful impressions which remained with us.

After the customary greeting extended by Emma and Rosa, the first thing Rosa noticed was my German hat. She remarked at once, "You are not going back to Reading with that hat," and she took me up town and bought me a new one. I could do nothing about it.

I also told the girls about our finances, which were nil, so they chipped in to pay Mr. Bixel's fare to his home in the west. He surely appreciated the favor, and returned the money within a few days with many thanks.

Our trip to Reading seemed awfully long, perhaps because I was so anxious to get home to greet mother and the other members of the family. I found everyone well and happy.

During the discussion about this and that, about home and Reading, my brother John told me about the new skyscraper at Fifth and Penn, the Colonial Trust Building. He asked me whether I had seen it, and I told him jokingly that I had seen it while passing Birdsboro on my way home.

It was not long after reaching home that I had an offer to take a position at Lindsberg, Kansas, but mother spoke up at once and told me that I had been away from home long enough, and that I should remain at home now. That settled the question without further ado.

I became acclimated to my home life quickly, and began planning for my future. I felt obligated to the folks at home and many of my friends, to arrange for my first recital. It meant hard practice, as I had neglected much of it during my travels coming home. I completed a program and arranged to give the recital in October, 1902.

I engaged William Grab, a very fine baritone from Hartford, Conn., to assist me. He was one of the outstanding American pupils at the Conservatory, and I had Lee K. Smith, well-known Reading musician to accompany him. Our recital was quite a success, both musically and financially. This was the beginning of my musical career in Reading, and it was here instead of some strange part of the country, all due to mother's demand that I remain at home for awhile.

I soon had acquired a good-sized class of pupils, and this was sufficient to keep me busy and occupied for the time being. Additional musical activities soon piled up, and these gave me ample excuse to turn down offers to settle elsewhere.

In the early days of 1903, I accepted a position as accompanist with the Catholic Chorus, then led by Philip R. Lee. This did not last long, for I took over the directorship due to Lee's unreliability in his duties. With the chorus

I gave several concerts which were successful musically, but were financially disastrous.

I suggested to the group that we try giving operas and this idea was given hearty approval by the singers. I selected the romantic opera "King Hal," by H. J. Stewart, a beautiful lyric work, as our first venture. I had a chorus of 80, and the work required some eight soloists, found happily among our group.

The cast consisted of Stella Reisinger and Miss Erlacher, sopranos; James E. Ellis, Philip A. Ryan and Paul Breedy, tenors; Mrs. H. B. Hassler and Mae Erlacher, altos, while the bass and baritone were H. B. Hassler and James Schwartz, respectively. The staging of the performance was under the capable direction of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Heizman.

We engaged a full orchestra of 28, consisting of local and out-of-town musicians. This was the local premiere performance of the opera, and turned out to be most successful in every way. Our first try in the operatic field was so encouraging that we gave two more, "Maritana" and "The Chimes of Normandy", in the two succeeding years. Unfortunately World War I put a crimp in our endeavors, ended the operas and, incidently, the Catholic Chorus.

My next venture was when I became a member of the B. P. O. Elks. This was in 1933, when the lodge approved my suggestion to give an opera under its auspices. I chose the "Bohemian Girl", by Balfe, of which we gave two performances for the benefit of the lodge. We had a selected chorus and outstanding local soloists. Margaret Whalen and Mary Dormer were the sopranos; George A. Leinbach and William Burkhart, tenors; and William E. Maier and Joseph Brubaker, baritones. George Strauss of Philadelphia was the stage director. The performances were a success musically, but the same could not be said of the financial part, owing to the great expense connected with it for the musicians, scenery, costumes and other items. The group remained intact for some years following, during which time we presented the "Chimes of Normandy" and the "Mikado", the latter being given several times.

Due to constantly rising costs, presenting operas, proved most discouraging. However, this early work in opera, due perhaps to our efforts, is now being carried on by the Reading Civic Opera Co. which presents annually some outstanding light opera or musical comedy.

It was also in the spring of 1903 that I became musical director of the German male chorus, of the Reading Liederkrantz, a position I held for 32 years. I was obliged to relinquish the post at the time Adolf Hitler began his drive for power, and when his followers here among many of the German residents made life very unpleasant for me. An organization in Reading known as The Friends of New Germany were very active in their efforts to bring supporters to the cause of the Third Reich, and this greatly interfered with the normal life among the American Germans who remained loyal to their adopted country. When World War II broke out, many of these agitators were put in their proper place by being sent to detention camps.

My days spent with the Liederkranz were most pleasant ones, and it was always a pleasure to work with them, since musically they achieved a very high standard. We gave many concerts publicly and for various charitable causes. We gave several seasons of subscription concerts, presenting the better known folk songs which are so beloved by the German people. The Liederkranz also gave many concerts with orchestra, as well as the famous "Hexenlied" (Witches Song), by Max Schilling, for full orchestra and recitation. The recitation was done by Rabbi Julius Frank.

This work was first performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra with the recitation being done by Ludwig Wullner of Cologne, Germany. We in the Liederkranz felt very proud of our ambitious achievement in this difficult work.

The Liederkranz was forever obliging by offering its services for sweet charity's sake. For example, we gave a concert for the benefit of the city's hospitals, another concert for the benefit of the victims of the disastrous fire at the Boyertown Theatre, and many other such events, and were always ready to assist in any emergency which might arise.

Prize singing was always a custom among the German choruses, consequently there existed the National Saengerbund with a membership of approximately 8,000 singers. Then the State Federation of German Societies, in which the Reading Liederkranz was active, took part at the various Saengerfests which were held bi-annually in one of the cities which held membership in the federation. It was my privilege to conduct several of these during my time as musical director of the society.

The first, in 1910, was given at the Auditorium on South Fifth Street, now the Food Fair Store, and was repeated in the same auditorium in 1923. This second event was held in honor of the 175th anniversary of the City of Reading, and was by far the largest and most successful of its kind ever held by the Pennsylvania Federation. More than 2,000 singers attended from this state, from New York, New Jersey and Delaware. This large group of singers assisted at the gala concert, for which the accompaniment was provided by an orchestra of forty from Philadelphia. The concert was a rousing success, and was followed by the prize singing contest by 18 choruses, in three classes, determined by the number of singers in each chorus. At the same event, which took place on Sunday afternoon, there was an added attraction in the appearance of the combined singers of Philadelphia, a group numbering over 400 voices.

It was a rare treat indeed, to hear this group and the finely trained choruses which competed in the contest. My task in this great event was most taxing for me, as I had to visit all the societies in the different cities to rehearse them for the massed chorus work. I travelled by auto, and was accompanied by my daughter, Angela, who also played for all my rehearsals.

Then there was the orchestral rehearsal for the selections which the orchestra provided at the concert, and for the soloist, who was the mezzo-soprano, Kathryn Meisle, from the Metropolitan Opera. I also had a rehearsal for the massed chorus with the orchestra, and I must not forget the

many rehearsals I had preparing my own Liederkranz chorus for the greeting song.

In my 32 years with the Liederkranz, I had the pleasure of attending and participating in practically all of the song fests held. Competition was usually very keen, and sometimes we fared quite well in securing prizes, and at other times, just the opposite. As the saying goes, win or lose, be a good sport.

The Liederkranz aside from its musical contributions had a feather put into its cap during the World War I by giving over its hall to the Red Cross for the use of the many patients struck down by the influenza epidemic in our city. With this, and the musical activities, the Reading Liederkranz held a lofty rating for its charitable and cultural work.

I was very happy to have had a part in all this, and it was too bad that the Hitler crisis had to mar this once beautiful custom, the German love of singing, and the *gemuetlichkeit* connected with it. While the German "Vereinslebe" had been somewhat restored, it is still far from having staged a comeback to its former status.

CHAPTER 9: ASSUMED CHURCH ROLE

In the spring of 1903, in May to be exact, I accepted the position as organist and choirmaster of St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church. This, too, happened in the same manner as my taking over the Reading Catholic Choirs. Philip R. Lee was the organist, but became very negligent in his duties and was relieved, and I was asked to take over. I agreed with the understanding that I be given a paid quartet. Through the influence of our good friends, Messers. Gross and Kase, our pastor, Father Cleary, readily granted my request, and I accepted the position.

In a very short space of time I had built up a fairly good choir, with a quartet consisting of Mary and Irene Hess, soprano and alto, Allen Mellert, tenor, and Leon Bettig, bass. We did many of the big Masses and worked diligently to perfect them.

At this time Father Cleary took leave of absence for a trip to Europe, and how anxious I was to show off our choir work upon his return. Things went very well with the Haydn Mass we did, and I really was proud of my group. After the Mass, however, Father Cleary called me aside, told me how well the choir sang, but added, "Please don't do it again for the Mass is entirely too long."

Naturally, we had to cut down, which was very difficult with the Masses we had on hand. I managed to cut out many of the unnecessary phrases and thereby shorten the length of the Masses considerably. I well remembered the long Masses at the Hofkirche in Dresden, but that was years ago when restrictions were rare and there was no one to guide you. These things have changed now, as we all know.

Father Cleary took ill and passed away in 1904, and Father Thomas McCarty, from St. Elizabeth's Parish, Philadelphia, was appointed to succeed him. The new pastor was well satisfied with our musical set-up, but in this year an order known as the "Motu Proprio" was sent out by Rome, commanding that the churches of the world restore the Gregorian chant in all the services and return to the music which rightly belongs to the church. It also stipulated that the choirs be restored to all-male voices, thus banning the women from taking part in the rendition of the liturgical music. This order from Rome created quite a stir among the churches in this country, finding little or no favor among the clergy and choirmasters. Father McCarty, now being the pastor of St. Peter's, asked me whether I approved of such a change, and if I was willing to organize an all-male choir and take the responsibility of introducing the music as requested in Pope Pius' "Motu Proprio".

What concerned me mostly was having to break the news to my mixed choir that their services were no longer required, since the women had been so faithful. However, I promised that they would not be entirely out, for immediately after I had organized the new choir of men and boys, I formed the women and men into the Guild of St. Gregory for the purpose of giving concerts of sacred music, although its work was banned for use during the regular services of the church.

This movement was favorably received by the members of the guild, and many works by such masters as Mozart, Gounod, Haydn and others were presented at intervals during the years. The most important perhaps was the first rendition of the "Seven Last Words", by Dubois, which I gave in its second performance in this country, the first having been given by the Church Choral Society of New York under the direction of Frank Damrosch.

Our performance was given as a sacred concert in the basement of the church on February 4, 1904, since the upper church still was under construction. The work is scored for mixed voices and a trio of soloists and organ accompaniment. The soloists for the occasion were Mary Anthony, soprano; Allen Mellert, tenor; and William Ringeisen, of Philadelphia, the baritone.

It is needless to say the performance was a tremendous success, and was highly lauded by press and public alike. By request, we did the second performance as a vesper service on Palm Sunday of the same year. This beautiful cantata became a tradition, and we presented it with but few exceptions every Palm Sunday until my resignation as organist of St. Peter's in July, 1953, after fifty years of continuous service.

I was always fortunate in having a splendid chorus of selected voices, while the solo work was in very capable hands. In the many years that followed, there were naturally changes among the soloists. The sopranos included Stella Reisinger, Florence Miller, Orsula Pucciarelli and Mary Gaul. Tenors were James Ellis, Harry Etter and George Leinbach, while the baritones were William Stamm, Albert Vize, Frank Hill, Robert Bagnell and William E. Maier. In the latter years, my daughter Angela took care of the organ work while I directed. One would think that the public would tire of hearing the same work over and over, but such was not the case, as the edifice was always filled to the doors. There is no doubt that the "Seven Last Words" was among the best liked cantatas during the Lenten season and also became a favorite among other churches in the city.

My new choir of 26 boys and 12 men was now functioning after several months of hard training, and prospects seemed bright for success. Many Masses had already been composed or rearranged to meet the requirements of the papal ruling. We began by using some of the Gregorian Masses in the modern notation, and others that were liturgically correct. The vespers were sung exclusively in the Gregorian Chant. I was very proud to have had the honor of having at St. Peter's the first boy-choir in this country, with one exception, of course, and that being the choir at the Paulist Church in New York, which, being English in origin, had always had a boys' choir.

This type of choir work, including the Gregorian chant, was all strange to me, and consequently I had to adapt myself to it. I attended some of the services at the Paulist Church, and became well acquainted with Father Daley there, who was most kind and helpful to me, and who enabled me to bring many good pointers home with me and apply them here, even to the extent of having the choir fully vested, and having processional and recessional. This was a very popular feature of our choir as years went along. There was little credence given by pastors and organists to the "Motu Proprio" in America, at that time, since many felt that the command from

Rome could never be fulfilled. Even His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, of Baltimore, was sceptical and said it could not be done.

We here, however, proved the opposite by giving a real demonstration at the dedication of the new church on July 5, 1905, the Feastday of Saints Peter and Paul. We did a complete Gregorian service with processional and recessional by the fully vested choir of forty. His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, was present on this occasion, which pleased me much, as he repudiated his early statement that the orders from Rome could not be carried out in this country. I shall forever recall his words after he requested to see the organist.

As I presented myself to His Eminence, he placed his hand on my shoulder and remarked; "Young man, after listening attentively to your choir this morning, I became convinced that the 'Motu Proprio' can be carried out in this country, which is quite in contrast to my thoughts when it was issued by the Vatican. However, what I heard today, I fear is too good to last." It was indeed a great privilege to meet His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, and his remarks pertaining to the music were stimulating and encouraging to me, to say the least. The words of the Cardinal spread all over the country, and articles about the music and the choir appeared in many of the leading papers.

I naturally received letters from pastors and organists in various parts, receiving both commendation and criticism. Organists in general did not approve of the desired change in the church music to which they were accustomed, and blamed me for putting them on the spot, because I was the first to introduce the chant and other liturgical music which was acceptable to the new ruling. As years rolled by a number of the churches complied to the orders from Rome, but many did not, and even to the present time I can mention many churches that are still struggling along in their old-fashioned way with mixed choirs doing all the Masses which have been banned long ago.

A lack of proper organists and choirmasters with the proper knowledge of the correct music for the church may be the answer. Then again, the chief reason for all this may lie with the pastors who appear indifferent to the musical portion of their services. A goodly number of the dioceses have taken a step in the right direction by appointing a proper musical authority to set the standard to be carried out by properly trained organists and choirmasters.

My work at St. Peter's was continued along the original lines with the vested choir, processions and recessions at both the High Masses and at the evening vespers. My first year's work after organizing the choir was not simple, everything being new and subsequently requiring many rehearsals. Then the changing of the boys' voices presented another problem which arose annually. In the early days of the choir, I found less trouble in making replacements, because boys were eager to get into the choir. There were no movies, automobiles and other attractions to distract them, so attendance at rehearsals and Sunday services was well-nigh perfect.

In 1928 I reached the twenty-fifth year of my career at St. Peter's and the celebration of the occasion was a gala event. I put my best foot forward in presenting the musical portion for the Solemn High Mass. It was a capacity congregation with many of my friends and visitors from the outside being present. My choir outdid itself and I was justly proud of my boys and men.

Another feature of this eventful day was the sermon delivered by Father Leo G. Fink, now Monsignor Fink of Allentown, who was a former member of my choir and who did me a great honor in being present and taking such an important part in the ceremonies.

My choir was much in demand for its services, appearing at dedication ceremonies at St. Joseph's Hospital, the House of Good Shepherd, St. Joseph's Home in Norristown, the dedication of Father Fink's church at Brockton, in Schuylkill County, and at the celebration of Father Kahl's 60th anniversary at St. Anthony's Church, Lancaster. We always used the full choir on these occasions. The boys always got a big thrill out of traveling, since this was the only compensation they received for their services.

My second twenty-five years became more difficult. It was very hard to retain the interest of youngsters in the choir work due to Boy Scout activities, and of course, movies and other attractions which vied for their attention. Evening rehearsals under the above conditions almost became impossible.

I finally decided on daytime rehearsals after getting permission from the sisters at St. Peter's School. It meant that I took one-half hour of their study time for rehearsals several times a week, or as I needed them. The church had presented me with a beautiful Estey pipe organ for my studio, and I put it to good use and therefore had many of the rehearsals there.

The boys were usually glad to get out of school at any time, if only for choir practice. The useful boys at the school were getting scarcer and scarcer, and as a result, my choir was dwindling in numbers. To climax the matter, orders came from diocesan headquarters that the boys were not to be let out of school for rehearsals and funerals. This did not improve matters, but merely added more to the difficulty of keeping the choir going. Protests against this action were of no avail, and in consequence all-men choirs are becoming the order of the day.

I felt quite happy that my fifty years of service as organist at St. Peter's was nearing its end. I had fully planned that after fifty years I would retire. The Lord spared my health to enable me to accomplish this, and I feel proud to say that in the fifty years I missed but one service, due to a severe attack of quinsy. In these years at St. Peter's I served under four pastors. They were Fathers James Cleary, Thomas McCarty, John F. Kiernan, and Michael V. Reing. I had a number of offers to take positions in other cities, and some very enticing ones at that, but having become well-established in Reading I decided to remain here, realizing that being happy and important in a small city was far better than being nobody in a larger community. I handed my resignation to Father Reing, effective in July, 1953.

After taking up my work with the Reading Liederkrantz and St. Peter's Church, my teaching, too, made rapid progress, in fact so much so that I turned over many applicants to some of my advanced pupils. At one time I had a weekly scheduled of 60 to 70 lessons, which often gave me little time for my meals, but being well and strong this was no hardship for me. Today when I think back to those days I wonder, how did I do all this in conjunction with my church work and the Liederkrantz, several other choral groups, operas and finally, my series of concerts? There is only one answer: Good health, ambition and a love for my work. I have always possessed that spirit of stick-to-it-iveness which in the long run pays off.

Included in the many hundreds of students whom I taught there were some outstanding ones, may I even say talented ones, of which any teacher could be proud. It would be difficult to rate the percentage of real talents among such a group of pupils as I have had in my many years of teaching. I dare say every teacher has a pupil or two who can be commended for their ambitious work, and my students were no exception.

Quite a few have made a success in musical careers. Since my retirement from active church work I have curtailed my teaching to a great extent due to extensive traveling to various parts of South America, Europe, California, Honolulu and the mid-western and western states.

CHAPTER 10: MY CONCERT SERIES

During my four years studies abroad I had many opportunities to hear great music at concerts given by the world's greatest artists, orchestras and chamber music groups.

And I must not forget the famous opera house in Dresden, where I attended many fine performances. Upon returning to my home city, Reading, I discovered that the local public and music lovers found but little here to appeal to their musical appetite.

Edward A. Berg, my first piano teacher, was the leader in musical activities in this city for many years. He served as organist in various churches and also directed the Reading Choral Society, which still is functioning. Mr. Berg also brought some of the famous artists of his time to the city, among them the newly organized Philadelphia Orchestra, under the direction of Fritz Scheel.

I was delighted to learn that the orchestra had appeared here several times under Mr. Berg's management, and with a great deal of success. Unfortunately the untimely death of Mr. Berg put a sudden end to his worthwhile endeavors. The passing of Mr. Berg was a severe shock to music lovers and the public at large. Immediately the question arose as to who might take over his well-planned work in furthering the cultural life of our community.

I was approached by many of my friends, who thought I would be the logical one to do it, but at the time I thought differently not knowing just how to go about it. I finally listened to my good friend Otto Wittich, the well-known local violinist, who suggested that he and I should bring the Philadelphia Orchestra back for a series of concerts. I consented to join him in the venture, and the result was two concerts by the orchestra. The venture turned out to be a success, much to our surprise.

A second series of a pair of concerts the year following was arranged for, and a committee of five, consisting of Mae Sternberg, Edith Kramer, William F. Moyer, Mr. Wittich and myself was formed. Foreseeing a risk, several of the members insisted that we secure guarantors.

After considerable discussion we all agreed to this plan, and I took it upon myself to have some of our public-spirited citizens lend their names as guarantors. Naturally everyone on the committee felt more secure and the pair of concerts was planned. We were certain of success and went ahead with the ticket sale, but shortly before the first concert, word was flashed that Fritz Scheel, beloved conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, was suddenly stricken and had died. A conductor by the name of Campanari was appointed to take over for the season, which also included the two concerts here.

For some reason or other our concerts were a losing proposition, which many blamed on the new conductor. However, we called on our guarantors for the sum of \$8.25, and believe it or not, several of the "angels" refused to pay their share, stating that they should not have been asked to stand the loss due to the change of conductors. We felt obliged to make good our

financial pledge, regardless of circumstances. This was the end of the Philadelphia Orchestra in Reading for many years.

This adventure, however, gave me the incentive to keep right on trying to establish something of a permanent concert series. I asked Edith Kramer to join forces with me to bring leading artists to our city. Between us we started with individual artists, such as Mary Hallock, pianist; Leopold Winkler, pianist; Francis MacMillen, violinist; and Ellen Beach Yaw, coloratura soprano.

The concerts in those years between 1904 and 1907, were not expensive when compared with prices today, but our venture was far from being self-supporting. I recall before one of the concerts, I remarked that I needed a new overcoat, and that I was positive that we could make sufficient money to pay for it. Just the opposite happened; I lost the amount I expected to make.

Miss Kramer resigned her partnership with me because it interfered with her music studies. Undaunted, I decided to continue in my efforts to build up a musical following, always having in mind the German saying, "Wer anhaelt gewinnt", literally, "if you keep on you will win".

The concerts just mentioned were mostly held in the small hall of the Auditorium, now the Food Fair, but I later transferred them to the Rajah Temple on Franklin Street after its completion. It was in the year 1907-08 that I began the first series of three concerts, by subscription or season ticket. The plan proved very popular and each year attracted more customers. I brought such artists as Florence Mulford, mezzo-soprano of the Metropolitan; MacMillen, the violinist; Kitty Cheatham, who specialized in children's songs and recitation; Arthur Hartman, violinist; Leo Schulz, first 'cellist of the New York Philharmonic; a return engagement of Leopold Winkler, pianist; and others of like calibre.

I would like to relate an incident that happened at the Rajah Temple with Schulz. In the midst of one of his selections, a bat flew through the hall which quite disturbed the audience, but not "Poppy" Schulz, who kept right on playing even while ducking the onrushing bat. It was one of those things, which helped to make the concert more delightful for all.

As the years went on I endeavored to improve the quality of my attractions. I presented Josef Hofman, pianist, who drew an overflow audience to Rajah Temple, and David Bispham, famous baritone and Wagnerian singer of the Metropolitan Opera. Both of these artists proved to be outstanding. The Kneisel and Flonzaley Quartettes also appeared in my series at the Temple.

For the 1911-12 season I presented George Hamlin, tenor, and Leo Schulz, 'cellist, in a joint recital; Fanny Bloomfield-Zeisler, pianist, the Flonzaley Quartette, and the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of Carl Pohlig. The latter concert I transferred to the Academy of Music due to the limited capacity of the Rajah Temple. The increased patronage thereafter compelled me to hold all of my concerts at the Academy, which now is the Rajah Theatre. It required a number of seasons to build up a sufficient following to enable me to do this.

The Philadelphia Orchestra returned the next season under the new and tempermental young conductor, Leopold Stokowski, who gave us a splendid concert. I engaged the orchestra again for the following season, but Stokowski failed to appear on account of illness, and Thaddeus Rich, the assistant, substituted.

Again for the season that followed, the same excuse was offered by Stokowski, and my patrons got wise and protested very severely, writing letters to the press both here and in Philadelphia, complaining about the treatment accorded our Reading audiences. It was learned that Mr. Stokowski felt that coming to this insignificant small town meant nothing to him.

The appearances of the Philadelphia Orchestra at my concerts ended right then and there.

But desiring to present an orchestra at my concerts I was successful in securing the famous New York Philharmonic, which appeared in five successive seasons under its very fine conductor, Josef Stransky, and gave us some excellent programs. Mr. Stransky, a very fine musician, also possessed a keen sense of humor. The backdrop at the Rajah Theatre happened to be a woodland scene, and each time Stransky appeared, he remarked, "If only I had my gun with me".

Up to this time the concerts were a losing proposition. My friend Jacob Nolde suggested to me that I secure a number of guarantors and save me the risk I was taking. But recalling what occurred when we tried this on a previous occasion, I decided against Mr. Nolde's suggestion, saying to myself, "I'll shoulder the risk, win or lose, I shall not be obligated to anyone".

For the season of 1914-15, I took a brave step by engaging Madam Schuman-Heink for my opening attraction, not knowing what drawing power she possessed, but to my great surprise the house sold out by subscription, with even stage seats and the orchestra pit being completely filled.

I took a step in the right direction, which laid the cornerstone for the future for me.

Some of my patrons thought I made a smart move in bringing Madam Schuman-Heink to Reading for my opening concert in that season. She became an outstanding feature in many concert series all over the country. I had her return here for several more concerts in later years. Her first appearance here was shortly after the outbreak of World War I, at the time when the Germans invaded Belgium and were accused of the terrible atrocities they were supposed to have committed.

Mrs. Haage and I called on Madam at the Berkshire Hotel accompanied by our children, Angela and Joseph, who were then about school age, thinking it would be a wonderful treat to have them meet this celebrated artist. She invited us to her room and greeted us most cordially. I had seen her before, in Dresden, taking part in the opera "Merry Wives of Windsor", and I was highly impressed with her witty performance. At the Berkshire she impressed us as being just an ordinary housewife with sleeves rolled up to her shoulders, and was very talkative and full of pep.

We discussed various matters, including the war and the German army

on its march through Belgium. As to the atrocities, she said, "It cannot be true, for my people would not do such things".

As we found out later, she was perhaps correct in her assertion, for much of it turned out to be purely propaganda. She was German at heart, for which we could not blame her, although she had sons fighting against each other. Under the circumstances, she naturally had to be neutral in her expressions at least. She also was diplomatic, and in this she was a past master. At the close of the war she became a great friend of the legion of veterans. At her last appearance at my concert at the Strand Theatre, local veterans presented her with a huge bouquet on the stage. She thanked them by kissing each one of them amid cheers and applause by the audience. Again, I say, she was a diplomat.

Mme. Schuman-Heink came to this country to star in the opera "Loves Lottery", whose composer I have forgotten. She toured the country with this production, then later became a member of the Metropolitan Opera, and was featured in many roles in Wagnerian operas. She was a great artist and a great personality.

The Academy of Music, now the property of the Reading Shrine Club, was somewhat enlarged and renovated and about 200 seats added, bringing the capacity to over 1,500 seats. Before the alterations the theatre seated only 1,300. This increase in capacity was a great help to me as my expenses also rose. The years from 1915 to the spring of 1921 were both good and bad, the latter due to our country being drawn into the First World War.

Notwithstanding, I continued my concerts with some of the world's finest artists and attractions available during these strenuous years. As an example, I had in my regular course of concerts, the New York Philharmonic Orchestra; the Flonzaley Quartet with Ernest Hutchenson as assisting artist; the Trio de Lutece (violin, 'cello and piano), and the Barrere Ensemble of Woodwind instruments, George Barrere conductor. Among the famous vocalists, during these years were Frances Alda of the Metropolitan, with Frank Laforge, pianist; Mabel Garrison, soprano; and Sophie Breslau, contralto, whose concert had to be postponed on account of the flu epidemic, which caused the closing of all churches, schools and theatres for several months. She was able to fulfill her engagement at a later date. Schuman-Heink made her second appearance during the season of 1920-21, and met with her usual success, before a capacity audience. Mme. Alda, it may be recalled, was the wife of the then general manager of the Metropolitan Opera House, Gatti-Gazazza.

Among the male contingent were Giovonni Martinelli, tenor of the Metropolitan; Theo Karle, tenor with the Elshuco Trio; and Reinald Werrenrath, baritone of the Metropolitan, failed to appear due to illness, but whose date was filled by Marie Reppold, soprano, and DeLuca, baritone, both of the Metropolitan Opera. They gave a splendid performance during which an incident happened that in a way seemed tragic and in another sense quite humorous.

DeLuca, in acknowledging the thunderous applause most graciously bowed and bowed, but accidentally backed into one of those non-essential

fixtures, a pedestal with a crude bust of some Indian Chief, quite incongruous at a musical event. However, the expected happened. The pedestal was thrown to the floor of the stage and the bust smashed to pieces.

What could the poor DeLuca do under such embarrassing circumstances? He very nonchalantly stooped, collected the fragments and placed them back on the pedestal, repeated his bows and retired. It is needless to say that the audience got a thrill from the mishap, and it in no way detracted from the evening's enjoyment.

Quite a number of violinists appeared during this period. Fritz Kreisler made his first bow before a local audience, having been wounded during the war while serving in the Austrian Army. He was permitted to come to America for a concert tour in 1916 before America's entry into the war. This concert was an extra, and not in my regular course. Financially it was not a success, but musically it was, because there is only one Kreisler. I attributed the only fair attendance to the attitude of our people towards the Germans, who were held responsible for the war, and the prospect of our country's getting into it, which, as we all well remember, is just what happened.

Kreisler gave a fine program, and after the concert sold autographed photos of himself for the benefit of his wounded comrades in Austria. He and I had lunch together at the Berkshire, and naturally chatted about this and that. I asked him whether I could send him some of the clippings from our papers. He replied, "What can they say about my playing?" Quite true, for who is qualified to criticize such an artist as Fritz Kreisler? Earlier in my memoirs I mentioned the violinist Francis MacMillen who had appeared in the early stages of my concert career, and who I now engaged to appear in a joint recital with Marie Hertenstein, pianist. The two presented a magnificent concert which was unjustly written up in the Reading Times.

The public was up in arms, so much so that two of the cities outstanding lawyers, who were patrons of mine and who had heard the concert, urged me to bring suit against the paper. We called MacMillen in New York and he agreed that we jointly bring the suit. It was not successful, which we anticipated in advance, as all suits brought against the press are seldom won. I even had our lawyers take the matter before the Supreme Court in Philadelphia, but the outcome was the same and only added to the costs. The article in the Times which brought on the suit was meant for MacMillen, and, of course, as manager of his concert it hurt me also. It was deliberately and nastily written, and was perhaps brought about by my refusal to grant a certain number of passes to my concert.

I felt justified in limiting the passes since I received but little or no advance publicity for my concerts, which I thought I was entitled to because of my advertisements which annually run into considerable money.

This was also the season for the so-called crop of Leopold Auer violin pupils. They consisted of Max Rosen, Efrem Zimbalist, Toscha Seidel and Jascha Heifetz. When the name of Max Rosen was made known here, everyone was on edge as to just what we could expect of these talented youngsters from the famous Auer violin class. Unfortunately these boys were all turned out at nearly the same time.

Rosen was considered fine, Zimbalist and Seidel followed closely and then along came Jascha Heifetz and stole the show. He was seventeen when I first brought him to Reading, accompanied by his mother, who watched carefully over him all during the concert.

As I was obliged to fill the stage with seats to take care of the overflow, Mother Heifetz took full charge of the stage door to see that no one would enter that door while her Jascha was on the stage. She was always fearful that her famous son might take cold, nor can we blame her for her concern. Heifetz's popularity grew by leaps and bounds, and his fees jumped comparably.

Mischa Elman was another Auer violin product who reached great heights in his profession. We speak of him as the violinist with the biggest tone of them all, known as the Elman Tone. Toscha Seidel also became very popular among the fiddlers of that day. But I put him one notch below Heifetz and Elman. Efrem Zimbalist also was a very fine violinist, and popular, too, perhaps because he married the famous overnight sensation at the Metropolitan Opera, Alma Gluck.

I had both these artists in my 1916-17 season, appearing just a month apart. Mr. Zimbalist came first in joint recital with Werrenrath, the baritone. After the concert he remarked to me that I should give his best regards to Alma Gluck, his wife, when she arrived for her concert. I did just that.

This is not as strange as it may seem, for two artists to be married to each other and not see each other for weeks, months or perhaps years. But such is the life of artists, and it often leads to unfortunate marital difficulties and occasionally to divorce. Read the papers for further verification of this statement.

Among the pianists appearing were such names as Leopold Godowsky, Ossip Gabrilowitch, who also was the conductor of the Detroit Symphony, Harold Bauer, Josef Lehvinne, Ernest Hutchenson and finally the temperamental English pianist, Ethel Leginski, assisted by Sascha Jacobinoff, violinist. Miss Leginski became very much upset when she arrived here and found the theatre closed, preventing her from doing her warm-up work before her concert in the evening.

She called me on the phone and threatened to return to New York if she could not have the privilege of her practice time before her appearance. I tried to appease her in some way or other, telling her that I was trying my best to reach the manager or someone to have the theatre opened for her. I finally succeeded at six o'clock in having the door unlocked and she was right there to take advantage of the opportunity. She gave a wonderful concert and all her raving and ranting was forgotten and forgiven.

Another artist of similar type was Pablo Casals, the renowned Spanish 'cellist, who found fault with my having a tenor by the name of George Dostal on the program with him. Casals said he was a great artist and did not appreciate sharing a program with a mediocre singer.

Several years prior to this a concert manager by the name of Newsom called on me about engaging his artist, Alberto Salvi, harpist of the Chicago

Opera. I told him I was not interested, as I could not see the harp as a solo instrument, beautiful to look at, but that was just about all. Mr. Newsom told me about the phenomenal success he had at a recent appearance in Chicago, and that he was destined to become a second Heifetz in popularity.

I could not be convinced at the time and turned down the offer. However, several weeks later, Mr. Newsom appeared again, determined that I must take Salvi for a concert. We sat in my studio until two in the morning discussing the matter, and finally I gave in to Mr. Newsom, and agreed to give Salvi a trial at a special concert for the benefit of the Visiting Nurse Assn.

The concert was given at the Rajah Temple, and proved so successful that I immediately engaged him to appear in my regular concert series of 1920-21, which consisted of Gabrilowitch; the New York Philharmonic; Helen Stanley, soprano, and Samuel Gardner, violinist, jointly; and a combination of Mary Mukle, English 'cellist, Idelle Patterson, soprano, and Edgar Schofield, baritone. Salvi was a sensation, completely filling the house, including stage seats, and many were turned away. He became the talk of the town, and also amazed me with his marvellous technique and musicianship.

I thanked Mr. Newsom, or Nuisance, as I had renamed him, due to his continuous pestering. But what an attraction Salvi was! Coppicus and Schang, New York managers, heard about his wonderful success here, and became interested after Mr. Newsom asked them to take Salvi under their management. I convinced Mr. Schang that they were taking no chances, but they nevertheless demanded an audition, which he gladly gave them.

I was so extremely interested that I made the trip to New York especially to listen in. The audition was held in the Steinway warerooms, and Salvi needed to play but very little to convince them of his worth and ability. "Sold," was the answer.

He became one of the leading attractions for the Coppious-Schang management, being in constant demand all over the country. After a number of years he retired from his concert work, settling in Chicago where he accepted a position with NBC, and where I understand he still is very active.

CHAPTER 11: I LOST A THEATRE

The year 1921 was perhaps the most interesting phase in all my concert career. First, the Rajah Theatre served notice that the house was to be torn down and replaced with a larger and more modern one. Secondly, where was I to go to continue my concerts? I immediately thought of the Colonial. I consulted Dr. Schad, who regretfully told me that the theatre was not available, but offered me the Strand. This suggestion fairly shocked me.

Outside of its location, I knew nothing of the theatre, and wondered if my patrons would come all the way out to Ninth and Spring to attend concerts. I inspected the house and was much surprised to find it such an interesting theatre. I considered it suitable for me, at least until I would be back in the new Rajah, a year hence.

I leased the Strand for one year only, of course, anticipating my return to the Rajah in 1922. I expected that the new house might be taken over by some syndicate and would not be available for my concerts. Since I wanted to be sure about the dates, and since I wanted the certainty of securing it for my uses, I went to see George Eisenbrown, the potentate of the Shrine, who assured me that regardless of who might have the theatre, my dates would be assured.

The theatrical firm of Wilmer and Vincent became the leasers of the theatre for vaudeville purposes, so I went to New York to see the firm regarding my rentals and was referred to a Mr. O'Reagan, one of the firm's representatives. I told him of my understanding with Mr. Eisenbrown, and we discussed the matter as to the fee for the rental and the dates, and we agreed upon \$500 per night, a fee I was happy to pay, considering the capacity of the new theatre. I observed the progress of the building as it neared completion, and eagerly looked forward to the opening of my 1922-23 season.

The house was practically sold out, after my announcement to the public. It was officially opened by Wilmer and Vincent with quite a fanfare and with many theatrical big shots present, including Mr. O'Reagan, who got one of the announcements about the concerts I was to give in the new Rajah. He called me on the telephone and asked me what authority I had to make this announcement, stating that they had not leased the theatre to me. One can well imagine how I felt under these circumstances. I asked O'Reagan whether he had forgotten about our meeting in New York when he agreed to let me have the theatre for the stipulated dates and fee. I asked him to let me have a contract, but he replied at the time that it was unnecessary, and I accepted his word of honor.

He simply repudiated the whole affair as though he did not even remember my visit to New York. I took the matter up with Mr. Eisenbrown, who remembered his promise, but said he could do nothing about it. I was in an awful predicament, and at once sent a circular to all my subscribers describing the treatment accorded me by Wilmer and Vincent, and the language I used was rather strong, so much so that I was threatened with a

suit which never was brought. I thought it was a mean trick by a firm that was considered most reputable.

There was nothing for me to do but ask Carr and Schad to extend my lease of the Strand for the time being. The Strand was an ideal auditorium for musical events, which was proved by the first concert I held there. The artist was Rosa Ponselle, the famous dramatic soprano of the Metropolitan Opera.

The acoustics were perfect there, but one drawback faced us. That was the absence of a stage. There was a ramp in front of the movie screen just large enough to place a grand piano on it, and it was sufficiently large to give a recital by a small group.

I still had fears that my audiences would not follow me to this out-of-the-way place, but the Ponselle concert dispersed this idea entirely. One of my patrons remarked that "we would follow you to H--- for a good concert." These were encouraging words to me. For this, my first season at the Strand, beside Ponselle I presented Eugene Ysaye, the Belgian violinist, then conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra; Julia Claussen, the famous Swedish contralto; and Paul Althouse, tenor; Josef Hofman, pianist; Joseph Schwartz, baritone of the Vienna Opera, with Mary Warfel, harpist, as assisting artist; and Marguerite D'Alvarez, contralto of the Chicago Opera.

As a special attraction, I brought in Richard Strauss, one of the world's greatest musicians and composers, for a recital of his own works. His songs were interpreted by Elizabeth Schumann and his famous 'cello Sonata in F was played by Willem Willeke. Dr. Strauss presided at the piano for the entire program. I deemed it a great privilege to have had Dr. Strauss appear before a Reading audience. I consider this concert one of the highlights of my career.

Dr. Strauss' appearance here was shortly after the close of the war, and he, not unlike many other Germans, suffered severely from the lack of proper food during the war. While waiting, after his concert, to be taken to Wyomissing to be the guest of Thun and Janssen, he paced up and down before the theatre and pleaded over and over again, "Gott hab ich ein Hunger, haette ich nur ein stueckchen Brod," "O God, I am hungry, If I had but a piece of bread." He carried on in this manner when he finally arrived at the Iris Club.

After he was served with a substantial meal, he was himself, and the evening was one never to be forgotten.

Regarding the artists during the first season at the Strand, Rosa Ponselle was the most jovial of them all. At a small gathering in her honor at the home of Edgar Hangen, she was one of the party, singing popular songs and having a good time to the delight of all. On another occasion when she appeared here, on the night before her concert she called me upon her arrival at the Berkshire and asked whether there was a good movie in town. I told her we would find out. It rained very hard that night, but I met her at the hotel with an umbrella, and arm in arm we marched to the Colonial Theatre, with Martz Schoffstall, then a newspaper reporter, walking along-

side us in the rain and interviewing the prima donna. After that, she had a snack at the Crystal. She was a real sport, and not of the tempermental kind.

The Claussen-Althouse concert was a splendid affair, with Mme. Clausen carrying away the honors. Her singing of the Schubert "Erlkoenig" made a lasting impression on the audience and created a demand for her return. After the concert, a reception for the artists was held at the Woman's Club by members of the Music Club.

Joseph Schwartz was another artist who was extremely tempermental. Like Casals, he objected to having Miss Warfel appear with him on the same program, but she proved that she could hold up her part very well. I can say nothing about Hofman, as I referred to him in a previous appearance. As to D'Alvarez, of the Chicago Opera, she stood supreme as one of the few great artists of her time.

As I remarked before, the Strand Theatre was ideal in every respect for my concerts, but lacked the stage facilities for presenting larger attractions, such as orchestras, choruses, ballets and operas. I consulted with Dr. Schad about the matter of adding a full stage, which would enable me to feature such attractions. He realized the cost for such an improvement, but I declared that if he would consider my proposition, I would do my bit in financing, knowing well that my stay at the Strand might be a lengthy one. We came to an agreement and the stage was built in ample time for me to arrange my 1922-23 series.

I opened the season with the world-famous baritone, Titta Ruffo, assisted by Yvonne D'Arle, soprano, with Alberto Sciaretti at the piano. This was followed by a return engagement of Mme. Frances Alda, the soprano. Another return engagement featured Julia Claussen, due to her success the previous year in joint concert with Paul Althouse. Her assisting artist this time was the great harpist, Alberto Salvi, who reversed the score on Mme. Claussen by stealing the audience's applause. She might just as well have stayed away, notwithstanding her tremendous success before.

But such is fate among artists. One of our patrons wanted to know where in the world I found this man Salvi, saying he never had heard such playing before. This was the general opinion about Salvi. The Cleveland Orchestra came next in line, and was made possible because of the enlarged stage.

The orchestra, under the direction of Nikolai Sokoloff, was a magnificent one, although only in the early stages of its career. It became a permanent fixture for a number of years, making eleven appearances here to be exact. The orchestra also featured children's concerts in the afternoon, directed by Mr. Shephard. I received permission to have the local children dismissed from school one-half hour earlier, which was a real treat for the youngsters who filled the Strand to capacity. One occasion found the children's concert sold out in an hour's time, with hundreds of children facing disappointment. However, I came to their rescue by calling the Cleveland office and explaining the reception the orchestra got. The management saved the day by permitting the orchestra to remain over the next morning

to play for the overflow children's audience. This performance also was sold out, and I was most happy to have given the children the privilege of attending these events. I also appreciated the cooperation of the teachers and music supervisors, who made it all possible.

Alfred Cortot, the French pianist, played at the next concert, followed by our own American violinist, Albert Spalding, and Louis Graveure, the baritone who brought the season to a close.

The 1923-24 season opened with Claire Dux, soprano of the Chicago Opera, followed by the second appearance of the Cleveland Symphony.

Anna Pavlowa brought her famous ballet to Reading, appearing in the regular series. This proved to be a very popular attraction, with the Strand being completely sold out by subscription for all the concerts. For Pavlowa's appearance, I was obliged to run a special matinee performance in order to accommodate the general public who could not secure tickets for the evening performance. It is needless to say this extra also was sold out. Pavlowa will be remembered for her portrayal of the dying swan, which was demanded at all of her performances.

Tito Schipa, tenor, gave one of his delightful recitals, but being one of the temperamental creatures, he clearly gave a demonstration backstage to verify this. With it all, he was a great artist and was well liked.

Along came John Charles Thomas with that beautiful voice of his, and with the assistance of Jean Gerardy, 'cellist, gave us a wonderful and joyful evening. During the performance he was artistically perfect, but during the intermission, Mr. Thomas invited me backstage, telling me he wanted to take my picture.

He focused the camera on me, but instead of snapping my picture, as he had promised, he unscrewed the top of the "camera" and invited me to have a drink with him.

You may recall that this was during the early days of prohibition, so I excused him for the stunt he pulled on me. I could take the joke easily enough.

CHAPTER 12: JERITZA, THE TERRIBLE

Maria Jeritza, prima donna soprano of the Metropolitan, who opened the 1924-25 season, was considered one of the finest singers and most beautiful women ever to grace the stage of the opera house. She made but a limited number of concert appearances, and I happened to be one of the fortunate few who had the privilege of engaging her for a concert.

Possessing a gorgeous voice and an outstanding appearance, she was blessed as well with personality. Temperamentally uneven, too, as I shall endeavor to describe. She arrived at the Hotel Berkshire where I had reserved the finest suite of rooms available. Mr. Coppicus gave me a ring and told me we had to do something about securing other quarters for Mme. Jeritza, since she refused to stay at the hotel.

I hastened to the Berkshire to try and straighten out matters, and found her seated near the elevator all bundled in furs. I was introduced to her, but spoke just a few words since she reminded me of an oversized school girl. Her manager, Mr. Coppicus, and I got together to discuss the situation, and I mentioned the possibility of placing her and her husband at Galen Hall, since the place was familiar to them. It was early in October and I knew that, the summer season being over, the hotel would most certainly not be open to guests any more.

Nevertheless, I called up, and, as I had anticipated, I got the reply, "Closed for the season." I described the trouble I was in, and whom I was dealing with. The clerk at the hotel became interested, and said he wished he could help me. He had an idea, and he asked me whether madam might be satisfied to take one of the cottages which could be opened for her. I put the matter before her and she accepted the offer.

She had brought a load of baggage which had to be transported to Wernersville. Since it was late in the evening, I was unable to find anyone to do this job, so I finally took my own car and hauled the baggage up to South Mountain for her. All was well and good, and she was pleased with the setup as we left Reading.

But when we arrived at the cottage, Madam Jeritza decided she now needed a piano, thus creating another headache for me. This, too, was finally taken care of by having some of the Galen Hall employees drag one of the pianos from the main building down to the cottage. I later learned the piano was not used once during her entire stay at Galen Hall.

Luckily all this trouble took place on the day prior to the concert, yet I was still under nervous tension and on edge all day of the concert for fear something else might go wrong. All passed off well, however, and for the concert and all my worriment I paid Mme. Jeritza \$4,500. This was the highest fee I paid any artist during my entire career.

In 1931-32 the management of the Rajah Theatre changed and I was able to again have my concerts there. The artists and other attractions during this period, from the Jeritza concert to 1931, were among the most distinguished and famous in the world. There was Schumann-Heink in an-

other return concert, as also Martinelli, Heifetz and Frieda Hempel, the coloratura soprano.

Rachmaninoff was one of the artists who lauded our beautiful Strand Theatre and cited it as having the finest accoustics he had experienced in any theatre in America. This meant much to me, from such an authority.

Anna Case appeared jointly in recital with Efram Zimbalist, the violinist; and Arthur Middleton, baritone, and Paul Althouse, who specialized in joint recitals, presented a concert that was unique and very interesting.

Then came Feodor Chaliapin, the greatest basso of his time. Here was an artist who had no set program, but announced the numbers from the stage, selecting the songs according to the mood he was in. Instead of the customary printed programs, the audience was handed a small booklet which enabled them to follow the numbers as he announced them. This was something quite different for our Reading audiences, and I might add that it was quite to the liking of the local concert goers.

Chaliapin spoke not a word of English, but through his secretary we could converse quite well. We spent several very pleasant social hours together at my house. He brought his very intelligent mastiff with him, and I understood the dog was his companion on all concert tours.

A superb concert was given by Florence Austral, the Australian soprano, assisted by her husband, Flautist John Amadio. Miss Austral was a member of the Chicago Opera Company.

Vocal ensembles in the series included the Russian Symphonic Choir of mixed voices, with Basile Kibalschick as conductor. All sang in the Russian language. A unique event was the group known as the English Singers. This sextet was seated about a table singing the English madrigals and other English songs, thereby reviving a custom long ago established in English homes where groups came together to enjoy music. This custom might be compared to our home gatherings, where a game of bridge would dominate. I understand this custom still is carried on in Old England, and what a beautiful custom it is.

The next choral ensemble was none other than the famous Dayton Westminster Choir with John Finley Williamson as conductor. This group also gave a children's concert. The choir still is in existence, and very active under the same conductor, Mr. Williamson, and now is affiliated with the Westminster Choir School at Princeton, New Jersey.

The orchestras presented during this period included the Cincinnati, under the direction of Fritz Reiner, who, by the way, failed to appear, putting the burden upon the assistant conductor. An afternoon concert, quite similar to the one given by the Cleveland Orchestra, was given for the school children of the city.

The New York Philharmonic came twice, under the leadership of Will-em Mengleberg and William Furtwangler, respectively. The orchestra appeared in the series in addition to the regular consecutive concerts by the Clevelanders. The same applied to the Cincinnati Orchestra.

The Flonzaley Quartet played another return concert with Harold Bauer as assisting artist. At this time my series consisted of six attractions,

but I also brought in numerous extras. For instance, Marion Talley, the young soprano from Kansas City, who made such a sensational debut at the Metropolitan Opera. In consequence, Miss Talley became very popular and she drew a capacity house for me. A beautiful voice and an unspoiled and charming personality were her chief assets. Unfortunately her career was but a short one, which even up to today is unaccounted for.

Paul Whiteman and his orchestra appeared here twice, giving excellent concerts of modern music, featuring George Gershwin's ever-popular "Rhapsody in Blue," with Harry Parella as the piano soloist. His programs generally catered to the more popular tastes, bordering more or less on the jazzy side, and creating quite a following among the lovers of this type of music.

Also presented as a special was the Polish National Orchestra which came to this country on a goodwill tour, under the direction of Stanislaw Namyslowski. The orchestra was not one of the best, and it did poor business everywhere. The New York critics had little good to say about it. One in particular compared its playing with that of the Scranton Symphony, which at the time was practically non-existent.

However, two of the special events created quite a furor. John MacCormack, the famous Irish tenor, and Vladimir DePachman, pianist, were the artists.

The MacCormack concert took place in the month of January during the worst blizzard of the year. He was without doubt the most sought-after artist ever to appear here, and, under the management of Charles L. Wagner, securing an engagement for him here was like pulling teeth. I tried for some time to soften up Mr. Wagner, but he always asked why I had not engaged him before, while the getting was good, instead of waiting until he became so outstanding everybody wanted him.

At another time when I again tried to secure MacCormack, Wagner replied by asking why I did not engage some of his other artists. I came back at him by agreeing to take Mme. Alda again. He replied that he did not sell his artists to pay the freight for others. This was most provoking to me, but disregarding his strong words, I still insisted that I wanted MacCormack, and finally Mr. Wagner agreed to my request and sent me a contract for the Irish tenor as well as one for Mme. Alda.

The MacCormack contract carried a few extra things, such as a fee of \$4,000 with a percentage arrangement above that amount. I had the Strand sold out at \$4 top, but the blizzard did me no good, as the foot or more of snow tied up transportation and all of my out-of-town customers cancelled their tickets.

I wired to New York to have the concert changed to a later date, but Mr. Wagner wired back that regardless of the weather MacCormack would sing. I could do nothing about it, and John came. I well recall that miserable night of the concert. Ninth Street was blocked and the traffic could move but one way.

When John arrived at the theatre, the first thing he said was, "And why in H--- didn't you postpone the concert?" I told him about getting in touch

with his manager, who refused to postpone the concert, and he seemed much displeased to hear it.

He did tell me then and there that I should forget about the percentage and merely pay him the contract fee of \$4,000. This was very kind of Mr. MacCormack, since the receipts for the night were far below even his fee.

I took my loss very graciously, but my business dealings with Charles L. Wagner were terminated right then and there. His nasty letter is still in my files. With all this trouble and loss, I felt that I at least lived up to my promise by bringing the great Irish tenor to Reading.

I also had Galli-Curci for a special concert at the Strand in conjunction with Fred Hand, of Scranton, who had taken a block of dates for the famous coloratura soprano who had great drawing power on the concert stage.

Here was a really great artist whose career ended much too soon due to some impediment in her throat. She was at times unable to keep pitch, due to this trouble. Possessing absolute pitch, it would seem unthinkable that she could not always sing on key, as much as she tried. It was finally revealed that the cause of her trouble was due to a morbid swelling in the neck, diagnosed as a goiter. She was obliged to give up her professional singing and now is living in retirement.

CHAPTER 13: DePACHMAN, THE UNIQUE

Now I must tell you of the unique, the temperamental and the eccentric pianist, Vladimir DePachman, about whom there is much to say. I had the pleasure of hearing this great Chopin interpreter for the first time during my student days in Dresden. Needless to say the hall was filled to hear DePachman give one of his inimitable recitals, and to witness his eccentric actions at the keyboard.

It was a rare experience for us students to see him dusting the keys, actually dusting them, before each selection. On this particular occasion he opened his program with the Italian Concerto by Bach, which he played very badly. After its conclusion, he took the customary bows, then apologized for the poor rendition, telling us that he had not practiced enough on it, but "wait until you hear the next number," which happened to be the Schubert A Flat Major Sonata.

It also was followed with an apology and excuses, sometimes in German and sometimes in any of the other languages he spoke. The audience was well aware of his peculiarities and was most patient, paying little or no attention to how he played his opening numbers.

Everyone was keenly awaiting his Chopin which was to follow soon. He played a Nocturne, the Barcarole, then five Etudes, two Mazurkas and the Valse Brillante in A Flat Major. The ovation accorded him was tremendous, and encores were in order, but not until he begged Mme. Rappoldi-Kahrer, one of the teachers at the Conservatory, to sit beside him at the Beckstein Grand, just as though she were his teacher.

He also demanded that a lighted candle be placed on either side of the music rack. After all this formality, he was finally contented and consented to play his encores, which were all Chopin. All the while he continued with his chatting.

It was in 1924 that he came to this country for a concert tour, and incidentally to Reading, where I presented him at the Strand in a charity affair.

It was early in October. He arrived by Pennsylvania Railroad, and I went to the Penn Street Station to meet him. As he stepped from his car I greeted him, stating how well I remembered his concert at the Vereinahaus in Dresden and how I had enjoyed his playing.

"Ah, you must hear me now with my Neue Methode," were his first words. We chatted in German for a while, then his manager told him to get into the taxi which was to take him to the Berkshire Hotel. But DePachman refused. He said he wanted to ride with Mr. Haage in his car. Mine being an open car, his manager feared DePachman might catch a cold, since it was a rather raw day. But DePachman, who was bundled in a heavy fur coat, insisted that I take him to the hotel, which I did.

For the concert in the evening, DePachman was in fine form, displaying all the mannerisms which made him a noted performer, and not unlike those I had seen in Dresden.

Appearing on the stage for his first number, he acknowledged the applause and proceeded to dust the keys with his handkerchief. He then spoke to the audience, asking them to listen to his beautiful music. During his performance he continually jabbered in English, German and sometimes in French, saying "isn't this beautiful?" or "Ist das nicht wunderbar?"

After the concert he returned to the Berkshire where I had had a piano installed in his rooms. Like Mme. Jeritza, he never touched it during his visit.

When I arrived at the hotel he was having his dinner served in his room. He had, among other things on the table, some lettuce with a cherry on it. He immediately warned me not to touch it, insisting it was poisoned. He said the same of the water which had some cloudy ice in it. He insisted over and over that they were trying to poison him. He never used any strange dishes, knives or forks, but carried his own when he went on tour. He even carried some cake which his secretary's wife baked for him.

I spent a very pleasant evening with him after the concert, and I had the opportunity to discuss matters pertaining to music in its many phases with him. One could converse intelligently with him, which seemed odd when you considered his eccentricities and the other odds and ends in his makeup.

Before leaving him for the night, I asked him for his autograph, which he naturally refused. His secretary asked me for the photograph, took DePachman into his bedroom and came out with the autographed photo which I prize very highly.

As I was about to leave at two in the morning to go home, DePachman went over to the piano and was about to play, when his secretary snapped his finger at DePachman, telling him to sit down.

"But I want to play for Herr Haage before he leaves," he said, "because he was too busy at the theatre to hear me." Of course, he did not play for me. His secretary snapped his fingers again and told me that they had to treat him in such a manner to keep him in check.

He was scheduled to leave for New York on the 9.25 train from the Outer Station, and again he demanded that I take him to the station in my open car. I did it gladly, and we got there just in time. The conductor called out "all aboard" while DePachman stepped off the train. Again the conductor called "all aboard", but DePachman told the conductor he wanted to speak to me once more. What did he say?

"Herr Haage, you did not have such a good house last night, you must bring me back again when we will pack them in," he said. The train eventually pulled out, five minutes late because of DePachman.

There was only one DePachman, and I am glad to have presented him to a local audience. Was he eccentric and temperamental, or just plain crazy? Take your choice, but he was a great artist.

His New York manager asked DePachman to eliminate his antics, which they thought were put on to amuse the public, and thereby took away from the performer the artistic aspect of his recitals. He attempted to obey

these orders, but the effort turned out to be a failure, so he was asked to restore his antics, and soon his concerts were a success again.

Returning to the Rajah Theatre, I opened the 1931-32 season with Lily Pons, the sensational coloratura soprano who had just then arrived from Paris to join the Metropolitan Opera. Among the very first concerts given in this country by the soprano was one presented in Allentown, sponsored by the Salem Reformed Choir, where Sol Unger, formerly of Reading, was the organist and director.

I was honored as one of the special guests at the concert, and also at the reception given at the American Hotel for the singing star. It was a delightful pleasure to meet Miss Pons, but due to her meager knowledge of the English language, we found it difficult to converse with her to any great extent.

Her appearance here at my concerts also was a rare treat. Jose Iturbi was the piano recitalist for this series, and the Cleveland Orchestra again was included among the season's offerings. Among the newcomers were La Argentina, known as Spain's greatest dancer, and the Don Cossacks Russian Male Chorus, with the diminutive Serge Jaroff as conductor. La Argentina drew a packed house, demonstrating her great art as a dancer and her cleverness in manipulating the castanets, which she used throughout the entire program. Her accompanist was a pianist, which was somewhat disappointing, since the audience had expected orchestral accompaniment, such as is used by the ballet companies. The evening, nevertheless, was most entertaining.

The season was brought to a close by the first appearance of the Don Cossacks, with their 40 masculine voices, then direct from the Russian Ukraine. These men fled from Russia during the revolution and now are Americans. Although their singing is all done in Russian, it still is much enjoyed by the public. Their many concert tours in this country have been completed with great success for them, with but few exceptions. They have appeared in my series five times, in addition to several extra concerts thrown in here. Russian choruses are noted for their deep basses, and the Don Cossacks were outstanding in this respect.

The last time I presented the chorus was immediately after the close of World War II, at the time when Russia began its so-called "cold war". It was a special attraction, and was very poorly attended, due, I think, to our strained relations with Russia.

People coming into Hangen's Music House, where the tickets were on sale, remarked that I was bringing the Communists to town. The results of these ideas implanted in some minds were quite obvious. The men in this group, as I stated before, had long before become American citizens, severing all connections with their motherland. So many of the Doubting Thomases among our public do not even take the time to look into the backgrounds of the suppressed people who come to this country seeking freedom, including the original members of the Don Cossack Chorus.

The Don Cossacks are a picturesque group. In their first years in this country they always marched through the streets in military fashion, presenting a formation which was a beautiful sight.

This was the end of my first twenty-five years in the concert game, and in celebration of the occasion, I ventured to put on a program which I am certain had never before been duplicated or matched in any city in this nation, either large or small. I engaged Rosa Ponselle; the Boston Symphony Orchestra, under Serge Koussevitzky's direction; Vladimir Horowitz, the pianist; Roland Hayes, the noted Negro tenor; and Fritz Kreisler, the violinist. I felt positive that such an array would be a sellout, but coming in the midst of the depression, my calculations fell far short.

Had I sold out the house, which under ordinary circumstances would have been the case, I would have been much happier. I tried to cancel the orchestra, which Mr. Judd, the manager, would not agree to, stating that they were obligated to fill the engagement, which they did. It was a sad sight to see so many empty seats in the theatre, and to think that the great Boston Symphony was the feature attraction.

Of course, the other concerts which followed fared likewise. When the time came to make settlement for the \$5,000 fee, I was given a slight reduction, which was appreciated, but which really helped but very little. Aside from the financial difficulties, I had other headaches, especially with Roland Hayes.

At the time, many hotels would not take in colored people, so I found difficulty in placing Mr. Hayes. After much persuasion I finally induced the Mansion to give him accommodations. When Mr. Hayes arrived, the day prior to his concert, he and his accompanist went to the hotel early in the evening and applied at the desk to be shown to his room. The clerk told him that the reservation had been taken care of, but Hayes was told he would have to enter through the servants' entrance. One can imagine how he felt upon being given such a reception. It was his accompanist, Percival Parham, who called me later in the evening about the incident, and said that he and Mr. Hayes were staying with a friend of his.

I spoke to Mr. Hayes over the telephone and he told me he was very much put out over the treatment accorded him at the Mansion House. I naturally expressed my regrets, and in reply he said that it was the worst treatment he had ever received. I later spoke to his manager about the matter, and the manager told me that Hayes was treated similarly everywhere. It was too bad that this had to happen here to such a great artist as Roland Hayes, but thank the Lord, the situation has been remedied in most of the states by enactment of a law which compels hotels to accept colored guests.

To give proof of this, Marian Anderson, Dorothy Mayner and Paul Robeson stayed at the Berkshire, where they were accorded the same fine service given to other artists who have made this hotel their headquarters while visiting in Reading. Another example was the DePaur Infantry Chorus, all colored, who stopped at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel during their appearance in concert here several years ago.

Mr. Hayes, with all his troubles here, gave us a concert that was not soon forgotten by the audience. I need say but little about the other artists who appeared in my twenty-fifth anniversary series.

Rosa Ponselle was the same glittering personality who sang at the Strand ten years before, again calling me upon her arrival, and first of all wanting to know what movies were being shown in town.

Horowitz was not disappointing either, since he is a very great artist who today is one of the highest paid pianists appearing before the public. As to Kreisler, there is only one by that name — and he is always the same, even to the extent of keeping the local manager in suspense by his late arrivals. He told me that he never had disappointed an audience, and that I was not to worry about his late arrival.

As a special attraction, during my twenty-fifth season, I presented Paderewski, about whom little can be said. As a drawing card he was sure fire. He, too, had the habit of appearing late for his concerts. He played in Reading several times.

How well I remember when he gave his first concert at the old Academy of Music. At that time, the Academy was managed by John D. Mishler. It was shortly after I returned from my European studies. A certain concert manager approached Mr. Mishler inquiring about renting the theatre. Mr. Mishler asked him for what purpose he wanted to use the theatre, and the manager replied that he wanted to use it for a concert. Mr. Mishler immediately discouraged the gentleman, stating that all concerts there in the past had been failures.

It was not disclosed at the time that the artist was to be Paderewski. When it became known, the result was a complete sellout, with hundreds of persons turned away. I learned later that Mr. Mishler was very much put out about the transaction, claiming that the manager duped him by not telling him the name of the artist. There are tricks in all trades.

CHAPTER 14: PROBLEMS OF AN IMPRESARIO

The 1933-34 season brought an array of outstanding attractions. Featured were Josef Lehvinne, pianist; Albert Spalding, American violinist; the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo; Lawrence Tibbett, the famous baritone of the Metropolitan Opera; and Lotte Lehman, soprano, also of the Metropolitan.

As a special attraction, the Vienna Choir Boys gave a delightful concert, on their first American tour. Lehvinne, Spalding and Tibbett also were first rate and were making their first appearances here.

At that time Tibbett was so much in demand that dates for him were hard to get, and his fee was accordingly high. Capacity audiences were the order of the day when he appeared. Spalding also was quite popular with our audiences, being purely an American product and a first rate artist. He was well liked everywhere. Lehvinne belonged to the top rank of pianists, and had a great following.

As to Lotte Lehman, she was a very fine Lieder singer, specializing in the Schubert, Brahms and Richard Strauss Lieder, which appealed mostly to the sophisticated concertgoer, and not to the general public. Like Mme. Rethberg, she was a perfect singer, possessing a rare and beautiful voice. Such artists, though great in their respective ways, mean but little at the box office and to the local manager.

The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, which had just arrived from Paris, appeared here for the first time, and it was their first appearance anywhere in this country outside of New York.

The ballet appeared at the Metropolitan Opera House for a scheduled four weeks before embarking on their tour. However, the demand for more performances in New York quite upset the touring schedule. This upset naturally included Reading, but it was solved by dividing the company, with one-half continuing in New York while the other half was sent to Reading to fill their engagement here.

The plan worked out well, and everyone was pleased and satisfied. The performance of the ballet here was so successful that I engaged it for the next season, that of 1934-35.

Yehudi Menuhin, the sensational boy prodigy of the violin; Josef Hofman, pianist; John Charles Thomas; and a return engagement of the Vienna Boys Choir completed the season.

Thomas, who was billed to appear on December 3, had to cancel his concert at the last minute. Thomas arrived from New York by automobile, and at once discovered that he had left his full-dress vest behind him. He wired home to have his butler bring it to him before the concert.

But this was not all. At six o'clock he came to the box office complaining that he had a slight cold and wanted to know whether there was a good throat doctor in town. I recommended Dr. Homer Rhode, who, I told him, had an office nearby. But I suggested that I call the doctor and arrange for the appointment. Dr. Paul Craig answered the telephone, and I told him about Thomas and that he had a sore throat, and that I would have him

come to the office at once. I also told Dr. Craig to jolly him along and make him believe there was little wrong with him.

I thought that his trouble might be due to temperament. Thomas returned to the box office feeling much better after the treatment, and told us he could go on with the concert because Dr. Craig would be backstage and would take care of him between numbers if that should be necessary. On the strength of this, I felt much relieved. We had a near sell-out house and the people kept coming in. But who came into the box office again but Mr. Thomas, and since he was in his street clothes I became suspicious.

"I regret it, but I cannot give the concert," Thomas told me. What was I to say, since the audience already was seated. It was perhaps the worst predicament I had ever been in. Thomas told me to make an announcement regarding his condition, and of the postponement of the concert to a later date. I refused point blank to do this, but instead I escorted him to the stage where I told him to make his own announcement.

I naturally made my apologies, and the large audience, while disappointed, took it most graciously when I assured them that Mr. Thomas would return later. It really turned out that he was very ill. Several dates were set for the postponed concert, but each time it was called off due to his prolonged illness. Finally, I had Nino Martini, leading tenor of the Metropolitan, to fill the engagement for Thomas.

Child prodigies come and go, but Yehudi Menuhin came and conquered. He began his career at the age of five, and when he came to Reading for the first time he was a matured violinist of fourteen. He was a charming youngster, chaperoned by his father.

The father was much interested in Reading and its surroundings, so I took my car and showed him and Yehudi about. Coming from California, Yehudi already was in possession of a driver's license and he insisted upon driving my automobile. After I explained the difference in the driving ages in Pennsylvania, he readily saw the point and left me in peace. His concert was a grand success.

For the 1935-36 season, I was unable to secure the Rajah Theatre, so I had to transfer to the Orpheum Theatre. Due to the limited capacity I had to adapt my program to meet conditions. I opened with none other than Lawrence Tibbett in his second Reading appearance. The Don Cossacks made a return engagement, and Dame Myra Hess, the noted English pianist, was booked but due to an illness did not appear.

Bartlett and Robertson, the famous duo-piano team, very ably filled the date allotted to Dame Myra. Nathan Milstein, the violinist, came next, followed by the Barrere Little Symphony, which closed the season. Dalies Frantz, the pianist, assisted the Barrere Little Symphony in its concert here.

This event also turned out to be a hectic affair, again due to weather conditions. The date was March 18, and there were heavy rains which caused floods in many parts of the country, especially in eastern Pennsylvania.

Mr. Frantz arrived in time for the concert, but not the orchestra, which was delayed by the flood enroute from Scranton. I had the first report from

Barrere about seven o'clock stating that they were obliged to make a detour, and would not arrive here in time to start the concert at 8:30.

The final word came from Allenown at 8:30, stating that they would give the concert regardless of the hour. I relayed the news to the audience, and asked Mr. Frantz to go ahead with his part of the program. This proved to be a good plan, and as he played all of his programmed numbers, and much more, the audience was kept in a good mood until the orchestra arrived, which was at 9:30 p. m. As Mr. Frantz had played his part of the program, the Mozart Concerto, which was scheduled with the orchestra, had to be eliminated due to the lateness of the hour.

While it was regrettable that Myra Hess was unable to appear, Bartlett and Robertson gave a splendid performance and was a most satisfactory substitute.

Returning to the Rajah Theatre, the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo opened the 1936-37 season, scoring their usual success here. There always was a request for this attraction, and naturally I complied with the wishes of my patrons. The following artists rounded out the season: Emanuel Feuerman, 'cellist; Myra Hess, the pianist; Rose Bampton, prima donna soprano of the Metropolitan Opera; and Ezio Pinza, the great new basso of the Metropolitan, assisted by charming and petite Jacqueline Solomons, a violinist.

The subscriptions to this series were very disappointing, so much so that I was prompted to discontinue it. The Rotary Club, of which I am a member, learned of my intention and came to my assistance by sending out a letter to the membership and others, in which it stated that my concerts, after these many years, had become a tradition in Reading and should not be dropped because of their cultural value to the community.

The effort put forth by the Rotary Club was much appreciated, particularly because the drive was promoted without my knowledge. With all the assistance from the Rotary Club, I still was much concerned about my concerts, then and for the future. I went to New York to consult with the managers, stated my case, and asked whether there was a possibility of having a reduction in the fees for which I already had signed contracts. They readily saw the situation and granted the reduction for all these artists for whom I had contracted. With this, and Rotary's help, I felt that another try was in order.

What caused this sudden lack of interest in the concerts? According to the subscription cards returned, many of the former patrons decided against the concerts because the artists were entirely unknown to them and consequently could not amount to much. It was true that the artists were perhaps little known to some of the concertgoers, but had they no confidence in my judgment in selecting artists?

The public is hard to please in the musical field as well as in other forms of entertainment, and unless it is thoroughly informed as to the popularity of an artist, it can see no reason for going to hear or see, and above all it feels that it cannot rely upon the judgment of someone else.

The artists in question were found to be up to the standard established in past years. As it turned out, many of the people remaining away from these concerts came to me later expressing their regrets for having passed them up simply because they were not known to them.

CHAPTER 15: NELSON EDDY'S SUCCESS

Having weathered the storm, I gained courage anew and immediately started my plans for the next season. Musically, this was one of the most successful of all seasons. The new season featured the San Carlo Opera Company in a presentation of "Madam Butterfly", one of the several operas given here by this well-known troupe.

Ruth Slenczinski, the famous child prodigy pianist, who then ranked among the highest paid artists, gave a very fine recital. Ruth made her first public appearance at the age of seven, and immediately became one of the leading artists of the concert stage, and commanded one of the highest fees of the day. She was twelve years old when she appeared here.

Hers was a real talent, unfortunately retarded from being fully developed by an over-strict father who would not entrust his daughter to any teacher but himself. Mr. Slenczinski was a fine musician (he played the violin), but obviously knew little about the art of piano playing and piano technique. However, the child thrived on sheer strength of her natural ability and uncanny talent. Details of what happened to Ruth in later years I cannot tell.

I do know that she married, but was not heard of musically for some years. Now she is again active and appearing in concerts, and reportedly doing well at it.

The Cleveland Orchestra was again scheduled, and appeared with its new conductor, Arthur Rodzinski.

And after several years of dickering with managers, I at last was able to secure Nelson Eddy, the popular baritone, assisted by his pianist, Theodore Paxson. This was at the peak of his concert career and he had tremendous drawing power. He drew the largest audience ever to attend any of my concerts. The capacity house found several hundred persons seated on the stage, extra chairs in the boxes and in the orchestra pit, and many standees in the rear of the theatre.

Nelson Eddy was actually idolized by the public, and Eddy Fan Clubs sprang up in every city. In some places where he appeared it was necessary for him to have police protection. In many of the cities he was fairly mobbed, and his clothing ruined.

I was warned by his New York managers that I should keep the time of his arrival in Reading a secret, for fear that he might run into trouble with some of the more rabid fans. Days before his concert here I received numerous phone calls asking the time of Nelson Eddy's arrival, and where he would be staying. I always replied to these inquiries that I was very sorry, but I wished that I knew more about that, too.

The secrecy worked out very well, and at six o'clock on the day of the concert I was called by the Berkshire Hotel and told that Mr. Eddy had arrived. I sent him word that I would be at the hotel in a few minutes.

I found him in the dining room with his accompanist, Mr. Paxson, apparently enjoying their dinner and unnoticed by everyone present. There

were a good number of diners present, but no one paid any attention to his party, not knowing, of course, that Nelson Eddy was in their presence.

I was immediately recognized as I greeted my guest, and everyone then knew that Mr. Eddy was in their midst. The waitress led off a real procession of fans to his table, requesting his autograph, which he readily gave. This was just a sample of what might have happened had the time of his arrival been publicized.

The concert, as I said before, was a complete sell-out, with several hundred persons seated on the stage. In fact, the stage was so crowded that there was but little room left for the artists and the piano. In view of the overcrowded condition of the stage, I was foresighted enough to have an officer placed at Mr. Eddy's dressing room door. This was a very wise move on my part, since it saved him from being mobbed by several dames who rushed after him when he left the stage for the intermission. Mr. Eddy gave a splendid concert and his program was well received by the audience.

There was some disappointment, however, because many of those who attended the concert expected Mr. Eddy to sing some of the popular songs used in the movies he made with Jeanette MacDonald, which, without doubt, contributed much to his popularity. His program was of the real concert type. He included several numbers which I had requested him to do, and he told me he appreciated my suggestions. He told me after the concert how delighted he was with the reception accorded him and he stated: "If only we could make the American public listen to good music!" He thought the program given here was a step in that direction.

Mr. Eddy did not remain in Reading over night, but decided to take the eleven o'clock train for Philadelphia.

We expected to run into some trouble evading the mob waiting in back of the theatre where everyone expected him to exit. And what a mob it was! So we decided on a decoy cab to take him to the Franklin Street Station, and the ruse seemed to have worked just fine. However, as the cab pulled into the station, there was a mad rush of some twenty-five teenagers and women who tried to reach Mr. Eddy as he boarded the train. They were endeavoring to get his autograph or to snatch some of his buttons for souvenirs.

In the excitement, the train pulled out before any of these souvenir hunters could alight; consequently they were all taken to Birdsboro, the next stop, where they called their families to come to get them.

Such was the artistic life of Nelson Eddy, idolized and lionized by American women.

It was in 1939 that the Philadelphia Orchestra returned to Reading to appear in my concerts. It was the manager, Mr. Allen, who approached me regarding the return of the orchestra, which had not appeared here since Stowkoski was its leader. He said he knew the difficulties we had had many years ago, and wanted to patch up matters to our satisfaction. We negotiated and finally came to an agreement.

The news that the Philadelphia Orchestra would be back with us again met with the most hearty approval by our patrons. Now under the leadership of Eugene Ormandy, the orchestra had made great strides, thereby

gaining a reputation second to none. A sell-out followed each time they appeared, and they appeared for 13 consecutive seasons.

Unfortunately, due to the trend of the times, the attendance fell off to such an extent that I have been obliged to cancel the orchestra for the time being. In addition, the orchestra's fee was upped on me, year after year, and this also was a factor in causing me to cancel it.

In the 1939 season I again brought the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo; Robert Virovai, the brilliant young violinist; Helen Jepson, of the Metropolitan Opera; and Vronsky and Babin, the noted two-piano team, who proved such a success that I engaged them for the following season.

In 1940-41, Marian Anderson, the Philadelphia-born contralto, opened the season. One of the leading artists of the day, she gave a splendid concert before a capacity audience. Erika Morini, the foremost woman violinist of her time; Jose Iturbi, the pianist; and Jan Peerce, leading tenor of the Metropolitan, completed the season.

It was feared that Miss Anderson, being a Negro, might be denied reservations at the local hotels, but this turned out to be a needless fear. One of our patrons from Wyomising offered to take Miss Anderson in case she should be refused admittance at the hotels.

She was accepted, but remained only a short time before returning to her home in Philadelphia after the concert.

How well I remember Iturbi's concert! Being a miserable cold night, his piano refused to stay in tune, consequently the curtain had to be dropped after each number to permit the tuner to pull up the strings. It was very embarrassing to Mr. Iturbi, who naturally blamed the difficulty on the cold.

To open the season of 1941-42, Paul Robeson, a Negro basso, came here with a great reputation preceding him. His was a voice that was truly outstanding, and he had a marvelous personality.

It is to be regretted that he has ruined a great career by his political views, which not only shocked this nation, but the entire western world as well.

An unusual attraction was the appearance of the Trapp Family Singers, which gave a program of appropriate Christmas music, under the direction of Dr. Wasner. It was then strictly a family organization, which had fled from Austria during the Hitler regime, and left their beautiful home to be taken over by the Nazi party. Their programs were delightful and enraptured many audiences throughout America and other countries.

Through the years, the Trapp Family Singers has changed its personnel, and subsequently has lost many of the family traditions which once distinguished it. The choir has been disbanded now, but their singing will forever remain fresh in the memories of those who heard them.

The Don Cossacks again returned, as did Artur Rubinstein, whose recital was a repeat by request. A concert that left a deep impression was given by the Salzedo Ensemble, consisting of two harps, flute and 'cello. The personnel included Carlos Salzedo, Marjorie Call-Salzedo, Rene LeRoy and Janos Scholz, respectively. This was a group that appealed to all classes of

music lovers. The ensemble returned at a later date, by request, but with a slight change in its personnel.

The First Piano Quartet, the Philadelphia Opera Company, the Philadelphia Orchestra, Albert Spalding, violinist, and Dorothy Mayner, soprano, comprised the attractions for the 1943-44 season. The First Piano Quartet presented an entirely new feature in the concert field. The pianists, Vladimir Padwa, Adam Garner, Frank Mittler and Edward Edson, were accidentally discovered by Edward Fadiman, who chanced to hear them practicing in one of the Carnegie Hall studios. He was much impressed by their playing and ventured in on the quartet.

He approached them and explained to them how wonderful they sounded, playing together, and suggested they should go into concert work. He assured them that they would be successful in such a new enterprise, but the boys didn't seem interested at the time, stating that they were merely playing together for their own amusement. However, Mr. Fadiman finally suggested that they take a tryout on the radio. This was arranged and the group immediately became very popular via the air.

A friend of mine heard the quartet over the air and asked me why I did not bring them to Reading, thinking that the public here would like to hear them in concert. I did not think so at the time, but on one of my trips to New York I made inquiry about the quartet and the possibility of engaging them for a concert. They were something different, and I was willing to take the chance.

The problem of securing four pianos occurred to me, but Mr. Fadiman declared that the boys would be satisfied with any kind of instruments, even upright pianos. I felt quite differently, however, so I scouted about for four grand pianos, and Steinways they had to be.

I discovered them among my good friends, who were obliging enough to let me use them for this concert, the first by the quartet in Reading, and among the first given by the quartet anywhere. It was quite an innovation to see four grand pianos being played at the same time. Everyone seemed skeptical about what they were to see and hear, but none was disappointed, since it turned out to be an evening of rare entertainment and musical pleasure. The popularity of the quartet grew to such an extent that it became difficult to secure a date for a concert. The quartet appeared here upon three different occasions, and each time played to a large audience. Since this group of four pianists came into being, many similar quartets were formed along the lines of the First Piano Quartet, but insofar as I know, none compares with it.

The Philadelphia Opera Company, which was organized for the purpose of presenting operas in English, had a very auspicious beginning and was destined to become one of the leading opera companies in the country. It gave us an outstanding performance of "The Marriage of Figaro."

David Hocker was the manager and Sylvan Levin was the musical director. I engaged the company for the second time to do "The Barber of Seville", but the performance fell far short of the previous engagement. I understood at the time that some friction had arisen between the manager

and the musical director, which finally led to the dissolution of a project that had promised to thrive and live a long, useful life.

I recall when Mr. Hocker invited me to Philadelphia to attend one of the productions which impressed me so much. I enjoyed the opera, first, for the artistic rendition, and secondly because I had the honor of sharing a box with George Szell, conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra, and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt. I naturally enjoyed chatting with those two celebrities, who agreed with me as to the apparent bright future of the company.

The Philadelphia Orchestra came next in the series, followed by Albert Spalding, who also was a repeat. This fine American violinist became a favorite at our concerts, and his appearance was always anxiously awaited. His appearance here, however, was not so smooth running this time, because we were engaged in a war.

It was about six o'clock in the evening of the concert that I received a telephone call from Mr. Spalding in Allentown, stating that he was stranded there and could not be here in time for the concert. Due to a breakdown of the train from New York, he missed his connection with the Reading train. He asked me to come for him or send someone to fetch him. Neither was possible, so I suggested that he hire a taxi to bring him.

He already had tried that, but was told that the taxi could not venture more than four miles outside the city, due to the gas rationing which was then in force. I called Mr. Seaman of Yellow Taxi and asked him if it would be possible to send a taxi to Allentown, and I had the expected reply, that they were not permitted to go more than four miles outside the city, due to rationing rules.

I was told by Mr. Seaman that I could have my request granted if the Gas Rationing Board would consent to it. This pleased me very much, for I happened to be a member of that board, and gave the go-ahead sign. I called Mr. Spalding to tell him that the taxi would be there shortly. I thought the day was saved.

But things continued to happen. The taxi burned out its bearings before reaching Allentown, and much time was lost before a second taxi was dispatched. This one reached Allentown safely and picked up the violinist, but just before coming into Kutztown enroute here, it, too, burned out its bearings.

Mr. Spalding, who was accompanied by his wife, his accompanist and two violins, had the presence of mind to hail the first truck that came along, and asked for a ride to Reading. The driver readily granted his wish after learning who his passenger was. In fact, I heard that the driver felt highly honored at having brought Spalding to the Rajah.

This incident was just another of the many I have experienced in my concert-giving career. Imagine a large audience awaiting an artist to appear, with me not knowing when he would arrive. Dean Moore, formerly a music critic on the staff of the Reading Times, suggested that we have the waiting audience join in a song-fest.

Mr. Moore played and I took over the directing. The song-fest was a success, and we were able to keep the crowd in good spirits until Spalding

arrived at 9:30, accompanied by Mrs. Spalding, Mr. Benoit, his accompanist, and his two precious violins.

Mr. Spalding appeared very calm after his ordeal, and begged me not to be excited over the lateness of the hour, for he would give a good concert. He appeared on stage in his street clothes, not having had time to change into his evening togs. He received quite an ovation and played as we never had heard him play before.

A singer with a smile and a charming personality was none other than Dorothy Mayner, the Negro soprano, who brought this season to a close. Possessing one of the finest voices, she was not great only among her race, but among the greatest of the time.

CHAPTER 16: MORE MUSICAL MISHAPS

Appearing during the 1944-45 season was the San Carlo Opera Company in "Aida," by Verdi, which was a very spectacular performance. It was complete in every respect, with the Ringgold Band and members of the Reading Civic Opera Society participating in the grand march. The critics rated this as the finest production yet given here by this popular opera company.

Fritz Kreisler appeared here for the last time, and as usual kept me in suspense by his late arrival. The Philadelphia Orchestra and the First Piano Quartet were on the list again, and both met with the customary success.

A newcomer for that season was Thomas L. Thomas, baritone of concert stage and screen fame. Appearing jointly with him was Janos Scholz, the very fine 'cellist, who will be remembered as having appeared here before as a member of the Salzedo Ensemble.

Owing to the success of the San Carlo Opera Company in "Aida", I received many requests to have the company return. I did that, and the opera was Gounod's "Faust." Unfortunately, it turned out to be a poor performance, and I had a much-disappointed audience.

Robert Casadesus, the eminent French pianist, the Philadelphia Orchestra and Yehudi Menuhin, now more advanced in years, gave another magnificent recital. Artur Balsam assisted Menuhin at the piano. Helen Traubel, famed Wagnerian soprano of the Metropolitan, was slated for the final concert during the 1945-46 season, but for some reason or other she could not appear. This added another headache to my list.

I was notified by her manager at one o'clock on the day of the concert that Madam Traubel was indisposed and could not sing, and the concert would have to be postponed. What could I do at that late hour? A substitute was recommended, but where to find one on such short notice was the problem.

The managers got busy in New York and finally found Anna Kaskas, the mezzo soprano, at a Manhattan beauty parlor. She consented to take Traubel's place, and was rushed to the train and arrived here in time for the concert.

In the meantime, the audience was not aware of what had occurred until I made the announcement from the stage. Being unable to inform the audience in advance about Traubel's cancellation, I thought the better plan would be to have a substitute for the evening, so as to avoid having the patrons find a dark house and be disappointed.

This concert was complimentary on my part, and I did not cancel the Traubel concert, but had her appear at a later date. I felt that I owed this to my patrons, since many of them had subscribed because Madam Traubel's name appeared on my list.

Anna Kaskas, notwithstanding the brief notice given her, gave one of the finest concerts of her career. The news of her success here made headlines all over the country, and I received many compliments for bringing

her to Reading. I also got many kind words from my patrons for arranging the complimentary concert.

A number of my patrons offered to pay extra for this concert when they found out the regular tickets were not lifted, but were transferred to the postponed Traubel date. After hearing Traubel, many people told me I was very foolish to have bothered with bringing her here at all, since Miss Kaskas gave such a fine concert. I still was sticking to the idea that my patrons were entitled to hear Traubel, if that was what they wanted.

Madam Trauble's fee is a high one, and when I offered her my check, I asked her to make some concession due to the postponement. She refused, telling me that it was her manager's affair. Naturally, I got nowhere with him.

Always having the feeling that we should have grand opera in Reading, I conferred with Charles Wagner about the company he had just formed, and which proved to be a real success. For the season of 1946-47, he scheduled Verdi's "Il Trovatore." He believed in doing but a single opera each year, and in doing it well.

I travelled to Allentown to witness one of the Wagner productions. I liked it very much and at once decided that this was the kind of opera we wanted here, and not the "fly-by-night" type which I had encountered during past years. Mr. Wagner established a reputation with his company, consistent from year to year, and upholding a standard that he has since held intact.

Like the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Charles L. Wagner Opera Company became a regular fixture in my concert series, appearing annually as the opening attraction. It always had an orchestral accompaniment of symphonic proportions, a double cast and a chorus of young voices, with Desire Defrere, of the Metropolitan Opera, as artistic director. It also always had an outstanding musical director. The Wagner operatic venture was assured of success.

The Budapest String Quartet, with Artur Balsam as pianist, appeared in this season, as did the Philadelphia Orchestra with Sgt. Eugene List as pianist and Igor Gorin, the distinguished baritone.

The recital by Sgt. List was most exciting, mainly because of his description of his playing before Joseph Stalin and President Truman during their conference at Potsdam. List is a very excellent pianist, and Mr. Gorin may well be counted among the many great baritones who have appeared here.

To open the season of 1947-48, the Wagner Opera Company presented Puccini's "Madam Butterfly" with Edwin McArthur conducting. Later we had the first local appearance of the famous duo-piano artists, Lubeshutz and Neminoff; Zino Francescatti, the violinist; the Philadelphia Orchestra; and Anna Kaskas, whose return was demanded after her success in substituting for Helen Traubel. The Don Cossacks came back as a special attraction. I gave a description of this event earlier.

In 1948-49, "Romeo and Juliet" by the Wagner Opera Company was followed by the Philadelphia Orchestra. A request to bring Benno Moisei-

witsch, the pianist, was filled, and the well-liked Vienna Boys Choir, with Jussi Bjoerling, the Swedish tenor of the Metropolitan, as soloist, brought this season to a brilliant close.

In 1949-50 the operatic choice was the popular twin bill, "Il Pagliacci" and "Cavalleria," both of which were given excellent performances by the fine Wagner group.

A return engagement of Moiseiwitsch was actually demanded, which I could not turn down, and the Salzedo Concert Ensemble also gave a repeat performance, but again with a slightly different personnel. Rise Stevens, mezzo soprano of the Metropolitan, made her first appearance here, scoring a tremendous success with our audience. Her marvelous portrayal of the title role in the opera "Carmen" made her a great favorite at the New York opera house, as well as on the concert stage.

The Philadelphia Orchestra rounded out the season, with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo again giving a special performance before a capacity house.

The 1950-51 season opened with "La Boheme", by Puccini, and was a well-balanced performance. Nathan Millstein, violinist, who will be remembered as having appeared in my series at the Orpheum, returned for his second concert here, again demonstrating that he belongs in the front rank of the violinists of the time.

I was able to secure one of England's finest pianists, Clifford Curzon, who had been so highly recommended to me by my good friend, George Woodhouse, of London. But again one of those unfortunate things occurred, and Curzon had to cancel his concert at the eleventh hour, giving me but little time to engage a substitute.

Maryla Jonas was sent to take his place, and she proved to be a capable and competent artist, giving a most satisfactory recital. It was a bitter cold night, and exposing her bare arms, she fairly shivered during the recital. At one time, she arose from her bench and remarked that she was freezing. One could hardly blame her, for many of the women in the audience wore their wraps during the entire evening.

The Philadelphia Orchestra was next in line, as usual, and the audience was warmly receptive to the next attraction, the Robert Shaw Chorale, which had such a tremendous buildup before coming here.

From my standpoint, it was one of the finest vocal ensembles I had ever brought to Reading, and the audience unanimously agreed with me.

In 1951-52, the Wagner Opera Company presented "La Traviata" to get the season underway brilliantly.

Clifford Curzon, the pianist, was able to fill a date that year. His concert was eagerly awaited, due to his reputation, and everyone who heard him was highly pleased with the recital.

His advance notices were not exaggerated in the least. Curzon is very modest, of a quiet disposition, and possesses all the qualifications of a great artist.

An attraction quite new to Reading was the Singing Boys of Norway. Sometimes referred to as the Norwiegian Choir, the group is made up of

boys and young men under the direction of Ragnvald Bjarne. They are not to be compared with the Vienna Boys Choir, even though they sang well and gave a fine program.

The Philadelphia Orchestra, of course, and then Rise Stevens, who also returned by request, ended the season.

In 1952-53, the opera was "Carmen", and due to its great popularity it drew a large audience. Another newcomer was none other than the fine tenor of the Metropolitan, Eugene Conley.

Being but little known by the general public, I was prompted to have an assisting artist, which, as I discovered later, would not have been necessary on my part as Conley was well able to take care of an entire program. But I did not regret in the least having Ralph Hollander, a young violinist, appear with the Reading pianist, David Garvey, who has established himself as a promising young accompanist in New York City. Marcel Frank was at the piano for Mr. Conley.

Mr. Ormandy and the members of the Philadelphia Orchestra were excellent as usual in their concert.

A return of Lubeshutz and Nemenoff, the duo-piano team, was most welcome to the lovers of piano music, hence their appearance. A brand new attraction was the DePaur Infantry Chorus, under the direction of Leonard DePaur, and it created quite a stir upon its appearance here. The group was a Negro chorus of 36 voices that has been rated as second to none in the field of male choruses. The large sale of recordings by this group speaks for itself, and this has done much in building the reputation of the chorus.

The 1953-54 season opened with a repetition of an early success of the Wagner Opera Company. The opera in question was "Il Trovatore." For some reason or other, it failed to draw an audience as the opera had done in previous years.

Opera as presented by Charles Wagner is an expensive sport, and the sudden drop in patronage concerned me to such an extent that I decided to give opera a rest, thinking that perhaps later interest in it might again be revived.

The Philadelphia Orchestra appeared as usual, but even with this world-famous organization, the interest and attendance dropped off considerably.

Zinka Milanov, Metropolitan opera soprano, is a very great artist, and I made a happy choice in presenting her here.

Among the many outstanding pianists I have brought to this city, in my opinion, Robert Goldsand proved to be in a class by himself. Very modest and humble, he is a great artist.

Another attraction that was most unique was the Gershwin Concert Orchestra, presenting an all-Gershwin program with Jesu Sanroma, the pianist, playing the famed "Rhapsody in Blue" and the "Concerto in F." The orchestra gave a splendid rendition of the Gershwin music, but opinions among the audience varied as to the listening pleasure in an entire evening of this popular composer's music. The music was entirely different from

what our audience was accustomed to, but all in all, the Gershwin evening was thoroughly appreciated.

For the 1954-55 season, in place of the Wagner Opera Company I engaged the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, which gave an outstanding performance before a packed theatre. Many of the leading ballet stars, including Maria Tallchief, appeared with the large company.

The public, in general, goes for ballet in a big way in Reading, which accounts for my having had the Ballet Russe here so many times in the past.

The very fine violinist, Frances Magnes, appeared with David Garvey as accompanist, and both met with great success.

At the request of some of our patrons, David played a group of solos and was well received. The sure-fire Vienna Choir Boys gave another of their rare programs, including a one-act opera which they always do so well. It always is a rare treat to hear these boys from Vienna.

The Philadelphia Orchestra played here for the last time during this season. It was quite a shock to many of my patrons when I announced that I was giving up this fine orchestra, at least for the present time, due to the lack of support I got from the public and the orchestra's continued increasing fee. Even when I had a full house, I always suffered a loss on account of the orchestra's enormous fee. I was willing to go along with this, hoping to balance matters with my less expensive attractions, but when the orchestra began tacking extras on me, it simply got beyond me, so I called an end to it, with deepest regrets.

For the next season I engaged the famous Mozarteum Orchestra from Salzburg, which is more or less an organization of chamber orchestra dimension. They gave a magnificent all-Mozart concert in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of this great master's birth.

Frank Guarrera, leading baritone of the Metropolitan, practically an unknown when I brought him here, was well received locally. Mr. Guarrera has everything which is needed to be a great artist. Voice, personality and musicianship are his, which led so many of my audience to send in requests for a return appearance by Guarrera.

For the 1955-56 season, a return engagement of the Ballet Russe was inevitable. Since I like to adhere to the wishes of our concert-goers, I could do nothing but bring the ballet back once more.

Father Sydney MacEwan, famous Scotch-Irish tenor, was highly recommended to me, so I brought him here to present his program of Scotch and Irish songs. He had a remarkable following in Ireland and Scotland, as well as in Australia, and his recordings are very popular.

Unfortunately, he sings nothing but the traditional Scotch and Irish folk songs, in order, as he puts it in his own words, to acquaint the public with these unknown treasures in folk music. I feel that his concerts might be more successful if he would include operatic solos and English ballads in his repertoire. He naturally disagrees, insisting that he would be betraying his mission if he did.

The Obernkirchen Children's Chorus, consisting of 30 girls and six boys under the direction of Edith Moeller, its founder, appeared before a near-

capacity audience. Their success has been such that all the dates for the coming year are taken up, with many cities left disappointed. Here is a group that has appeal for the public in general, and like many other similar attractions can always be assured of a good following.

Robert Goldsand, the pianist, gave another of his exquisite recitals here. He is a pianist who can be heard over and over again. To me, there is none better. The Mozarteum Orchestra brought the season to a close.

I have now arrived at my 49th year. In the 1956-57 season I arranged for top attractions, opening with Lily Pons, who made her second appearance here. The famous Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, under William Steinberg, the internationally famous conductor, was a perfect replacement for the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Vronsky and Babin, the two-piano team considered the foremost one before the public today, returned for the third time, and Frank Guarrera received a very warm welcome on his second appearance here.

The DePaur Chorus, which appeared here several seasons ago, was not touring this year, and instead Leonard DePaur will present in concert form acts from three operas, including "Carmen Jones", "Porgy and Bess" and "Four Saints in Three Acts." This is an opera gala with a large chorus, orchestra and prominent soloists.

CHAPTER 17: BEHIND THE SCENES

Few patrons who attend concerts and other musical attractions know about the necessary details in preparing for the presentation of such events.

Many problems are involved. The greatest is perhaps the selection of the artists and combinations required in making up a series of events which will be well-balanced and which will meet with the approval of the audience.

This is a task which is becoming more and more difficult as the years pass on. I can speak with authority on this subject after my fifty years of experience. In the early days artists were to be had at a much lower figure, but year after year these figures grew to enormous fees running into thousands of dollars.

Naturally, due to the trend of the times, everything has risen, including costs of the theatre, and the added taxes have not helped matters at all. I have endeavored to keep the price of tickets at the lowest minimum, considering the high cost of the attractions presented and the costs of printing, theatre rent, stage hands, advertising, mailing and many other incidentals too numerous to mention here.

My total concert expenses up to the present time have gone well over the half million dollar mark. The concert business is a risk at best, since one never knows what the next season may have in store.

With the many adversities I have encountered in these fifty years, I consider myself most fortunate in being able to struggle on without a single break, to achieve my single purpose of bringing to our city the best possible talent in the musical world.

The loyalty of our music-loving citizens, whose support is largely responsible, enables me to fulfill my purpose.

To all these I owe my overwhelming appreciation and thanks.

In closing, may I add that I have presented some three hundred artists and musical attractions during the fifty years as an impresario and concert manager.

ORGANIZATIONS AND AFFILIATIONS

Member, defunct Chorus Directors' Union of America.

Member, Reading Rotary Club.

Member and secretary, former Song Leaders' Assn. of Rotary.

Member, Music Club of Reading. Served three years as its president.

One of the organizers of Music Teachers' Assn. of Reading, and its only president since its formation 30 years ago.

Member, Pennsylvania State Music Teachers' Assn.

Member, National Music Teachers' Assn.

Honorary member, Reading Liederkrantz.

Member, Isaac Walton League.

Member, Holy Name Society of St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church.

Member, Nocturnal Adoration Society of Berks County.

Member, Reading Lodge of Elks No. 115, and its organist for 20 years.

Member, American Guild of Organists.

MUSICAL GROUPS PRESENTED

ORCHESTRAS:

Philadelphia Orchestra, eighteen times, with Fritz Scheel, Campanari, Carl Pohlig, Leopold Stowkowski and Eugene Ormandy as conductors.

New York Symphony, with Walter Damrosch as conductor.

New York Philharmonic, seven times, with Josef Stransky, Willem Mengelberg and Furtwaengler as conductors.

Cleveland Symphony, twelve times, with Nikolai Sokoloff and Artur Rodzinski as conductors.

Cincinnati Symphony with Fritz Reiner as conductor.

Polish National Orchestra.

Paul Whiteman Orchestra, twice.

Boston Symphony, with Serge Koussevitzky as conductor.

Barrere Little Symphony, with George Barrere as conductor.

Gershwin Concert Orchestra, with Robert Zeller as conductor.

Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra, twice, with Ernest Maerzendorfer as conductor.

Pittsburgh Symphony, with William Steinberg as conductor.

OPERA COMPANIES:

Henry Savage Opera Company, twice.

Creatore Opera Company, four performances.

Manhattan Opera Company.

The Bostonians.

San Carlo Opera Company, five times.

Kingshenchman.

De Foe, French-Italian, five times.

Cosmopolitan.

La Scale of Philadelphia.

Philadelphia Grand Opera Company, twice.

Charles L. Wagner Opera Company, eight times.

DePaur Opera Gala.

BALLET COMPANIES:

Anna Pavlowa, twice.

Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, eight times.

Ted Shawn and His Male Dancers.

La Argentina, Spanish soloist.

VOCAL ENSEMBLES AND CHORUSES:

Persian Cycle Quartet.

De Reszke Singers.

Dayton Westminster Choir.

English Singers.

Russian Symphonic Choir.

Don Cossacks, seven times.

Vienna Boys Choir, seven times.

Trapp Family Singers.

Robert Shaw Chorale.
Singing Boys' of Norway.
DePaur Infantry Chorus.
Obernkirchen Childrens' Choir.

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLES:

Barrere Woodwind.
Trio de Lutece.
Elshuco Trio.
Salzedo Ensemble.

STRING QUARTETS:

Kneisel.
Flonzaley.
Budapest.

SOLOISTS PRESENTED

SOPRANOS:

Kitty Cheatham, Ellen Beach Yaw, Frances Alda (2), Grace Kern, Alma Gluck, Mabel Garrison, Marie Rappold, Nina Morgano, Adele Kruger, Idelle Patterson, Rosa Ponselle (2), Frieda Hempel (2), Helen Stanley, Elizabeth Schuman, Galli-Curci, Maria Jeritza, Marion Talley, Elizabeth Rethberg, Gina Pinnera, Lilly Pons (2), Lotta Lehman, Rose Bampton, Dorothy Mayner, Orsula Pucciarelli, Grace Moore, Helen Jepsen, Helen Traubel, Zinka Milanov and Eleanor Steber.

ALTOS AND MEZZOS:

Florence Mulford, Gertrude Rennyson, Merle Alcock, Sophie Breslau, Julia Claussen, Margaret D' Alvarez, Sigrid Onegan, Rose Raisa, Florence Austral, Marian Anderson, Anna Kaskas, Rise Stevens and Schumann-Heink.

TENORS:

Glenn Hall, George Hamlin, John Campbell, Paul Reimer, George Dostal, Giovanni Martinelli, Theo Karle, Paul Althouse, Tito Schipa, John McCormack, Richard Crooks, Roland Hayes, Nino Martini, Jan Peerce, Jussi Bjoerling, Eugene Conley and Father Sydney MacEwan.

BARITONES:

David Bispham (2), Reinald Werrenrath (3), Giuseppi de Luca, Oscar Seagal, Edgar Schofield, Joseph Schwartz, Titta Ruffo, Louis Graveure, John Charles Thomas, Arthur Middleton, Giocomo Rimini, Lawrence Tibbett (2), Nelson Eddy, Igor Gorin, Frank Guarrera (2) and Thomas L. Thomas.

BASSES:

Milo Picco, Feodor Chaliapin, Ezio Pinza, Paul Robeson and (theremist) Clara Rockmore.

PIANISTS:

Mary Hallock, Georgiella Lay, Leopold Winkler, Gina Aubert, Ellis Clark Hamman, Fanny Bloomfield-Zeisler, Josef Hofman (3), Harry Gil-

bert, Josef Lehvinne (2), Harold Bauer (3), Mary Wilderman, Ernest Hutchinson (3), Ethel Leginski, Guiomar Novaes, Andre Benoist, Leopold Godowsky, Edith Cave Cole, Emilio Roxas, Frank Bibb, Percy Grainger, Rudolph Gruen, Ossip Gabrilowitsch, Stuart Ross, Lyell Barber, Alberta Sciaretti, Homer Samuels, Alfred Cortot, Vladimir DePachman, Fred Longas, Siegfried Schultze, Charles Albert Baker, Emil Polak, Erno Balogh, Ignaz Friedman, Frank Rupp, Ignace Strasfogel, Alexander Brailowski, Max Rabinowitsch, Pierre Lubeshutz, Salvatore Fonito, Mischa Levitzki, Nils Nelson, Sergei Rachmanninoff, Jose Iturbi, Guiseppi Bamboscheck, Ignaz Paderewski (2), Vladimir Horowitz, Percival Parham, Dalies Frantz, Stuart Wille, Ruth Slenzcinski, Vronsky and Babin (3), Ted Paxson, Dame Myra Hess, Bartlett and Robinson, Leo Taubman, Wolfgang Rebner, Fritz Kitzinger, Lawrence Brown, Artur Rubinstein (2), First Piano Quartet (4), Robert Casadesus, Eugene List, Lubeshutz and Memenoff, Benno Moiseiwitsch, Brook Smith, Clifford Curzon, Maryla Jonas, David Garvey and Robert Goldsand (2).

VIOLINISTS:

Maxmilian Dick, Frances McMillen, Arthur Hartman, Mischa Elman (3), Kathleen Parlow, Fritz Kreisler, Thaddeus Rich, Efrem Zimbalist, Sascha Jacobinoff, Jascha Heifetz, Toscha Seidel, Samuel Gardner, Elias Breskin, Maxmillian Rose, Eugene Ysaye, Albert Spalding, Bronislaw Huberman, Josef Szigeti, Paul Kochansky, Yehudi Menuhin (2), Nathan Millstein (2), Jacqueline Solomons, Robert Virovai, Erica Morini, Zino Francescatti, Ralph Hollander and Frances Mages.

VIOLINCELLOS:

Leo Schulz, Herman Sandby, Hans Kindler, Pablo Casals, Paul Kefer, Max Gegna, May Mukle, Willem Willeke, Jean Gerardy, Felix Salmond, Emanuel Feuerman, Gregor Piatigorsky and Janos Scholz.

HARPISTS:

Annie Louise David, Salvatore Stefano, Mary Warfel (2), Alberto Salvi (3) and Carlos Salzedo.

FLAUTISTS:

Lewis Lombardo, George Barrere, Manuel Berenguer, Louis Fritze and John Amadio.

MY FAMILY

On August 2, 1906, I was married to Theresa C. Bettig, whose parents immigrated to America from France. Her mother had passed away some years before, which imposed upon her the duty of keeping house for her father, a blacksmith by trade. We were married quietly at St. Peter's by Father McCarty, at the ungodly hour of 6 a. m. We had the customary Wedding Breakfast attended only by our immediate families.

We left on our honeymoon at 8, bound for Philadelphia, New York, Boston and Maine. We spent several days in Philadelphia and New York before setting sail for Boston via Fall River Line. These boats sailed by night and the trip was most pleasant at the outset, but a mishap at about midnight somewhat marred the pleasure of our voyage.

At the time mentioned there was a terrific crash which naturally aroused everyone on board. Not being aware of what had happened, we, among many of the other passengers were alarmed, and several women became hysterical and threatened to leap overboard. However, the crew was up to the occasion and succeeded in calming everyone. After we learned that the mishap entailed only a broken shaft we felt much relieved. Our boat could not proceed any further, so we stayed aboard until morning when we were taken ashore at New London. Connecticut, and then taken to Boston by train. This was a strange but under the circumstances a happy experience. After a brief stay in the Bean city, we proceeded to Portland, Maine, again by steamer. This was a trip by daylight and a most delightful one.

I like to tell about a foolish thing I did on this trip. While promenading on the upper deck I looked down and noticed a man, perhaps one of the crew, poking his head out of a port hole, so I decided to have some fun. I made some spit balls and dropped them on the poor fellow's head, which caused much laughter among some of the passengers, including myself, but during the hilarity my glasses slipped from my nose into the ocean. Had the boy taken notice of this mishap, he quite properly could have remarked that it "served me right". Well, I completed my honeymoon minus my glasses.

It did serve me right by taking such advantage with spit balls. I often thought of my foolishness, and wondered whether any fish was ever caught wearing my glasses. We spent several days in Portland and incidently did some fishing at Lake Sabago, with some nice catches. We returned to Boston, again by steamer, running into some rough weather with plenty of sickness aboard. We finally returned to New York and home by Penna. R. R., and quite happy after such a delightful trip. We settled down at 541 Bingham Street, living with father-in-law Bettig for a few years before acquiring our home at 226 South Fifth Street, where we are still residing.

We were blessed with four children, Angela being our first born, followed by a boy who unfortunately died shortly after birth. Joseph came along next, and then George Francis, the fourth and last, who suffered an injury by falling from his coach at the age of one year. Due to this mishap, the poor child became helpless for the remainder of his life. We did all in

our power to restore him to health, but to no avail. He was taken to specialists in New York and Philadelphia after our local doctors failed to do anything for him. One of the doctors in Philadelphia gave up the case and advised us that nothing could be done for him, at the same time stating that the child might live to be eight or nine, but no more. However, he lived to be 23, and passed away in 1939. This was one of the crosses we had to bear, and his mother had most of the cares notwithstanding the nurses and others who also did their part in comforting the child.

In our first child, Angela, we discovered that we had an unusual musical talent in our family which showed great possibilities. She began to play, not in the usual childish drum-drum manner, but church hymns and pieces that she heard my pupils play while taking their lessons. She always sat in the room next to my studio, listening intently, and the moment the pupil was through, she would rush into the studio to repeat practically everything she had heard. At the age of five, she played very well indeed, and only compositions she had heard in my studio, plus the numbers she heard the artists play at our concerts.

Only by hearing the music could she play the pieces, for she knew no notes as yet, and I left her strictly on her own, thinking that there was ample time to go into serious work. I finally decided to turn her over to one of my pupils, L. Esther Stuber, but she resented this stating that she could play, so "why take lessons?" Up to this time she had already played works by Beethoven, Schubert, the Grieg Concerto and numerous others.

She was only five when we took her to hear Fanny Bloomfield Zeisler who appeared at one of the concerts, and when we returned home that evening, Angela immediately sat down and played nearly the entire program she had heard. It was uncanny to say the least and Mrs. Haage and I listened in amazement to what the girl, aged five, was doing. She began lessons and progressed rapidly and we pictured a promising future for her.

Several years later she began playing tennis and unfortunately sprained one of her fingers, which eventually prevented her from going on with piano work. This mishap did not hamper her playing the organ, so she decided to take up this instrument as a career. She entered the Zeckwer-Hahn Conservatory in Philadelphia and took up her organ studies with Dr. H. Alexander Matthews.

She was graduated from there with honors, then accepted the position as organist and choirmaster at Sacred Heart Church in West Reading. After a number of years of service there, she resigned to accept a similar position at St. Paul's at Ninth and Walnut Streets in Reading. She is married to Edward W. Ganster and the union is blessed with five children — two girls, and three boys. She is also very active in teaching and has her studio at her home, 401 Reading Avenue, West Reading.

Our son, Joseph, was named for Josef Hofmann the famous pianist, who appeared in Reading in a Haage concert in 1911, the year of Joseph's birth. His talents do not run along musical lines. While he, too, studied piano, he belonged to that category of pupils who despise practicing. He likes music, nevertheless, and was the alto soloist in my choir at St. Peter's

until his voice changed. He later sang baritone until my retirement as organist in 1953. He also sang in the Liederkrantz chorus and took part in the various operas which I directed.

He attended St. Peter's Parochial School, and then transferred to Reading High School from which he was graduated. He matriculated to Villanova College and was graduated in 1932 with the degree of B. S. in Electrical Engineering. The depression, however, offered him no opportunity to follow his chosen field, so he spent a semester at Albright College to earn the required education credits for certification as a teacher in the fields of mathematics and science. Then followed several years of substitute teaching in the various secondary schools of Reading, and finally a permanent appointment at Reading Senior High School.

Uncle Sam called him to the colors several months before our country's entry into World War II. He was the first of the Reading teachers to be drafted. He spent most of his army career at Fort Monmouth, N. J., where he attended Officer Candidate School and was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Signal Corps. He then became a teacher in the same school. After over four years of service he received orders to go to Japan. Although V-J day intervened, he sojourned in the Land of the Rising Sun for five months before returning home to be discharged. He then returned to his position at Reading High School.

In 1952 he received the degree of Master of Science in Education from the University of Pennsylvania, specializing in administration. Since that time he has served as Guidance Counselor at Reading High School.

Joseph is married to the former Phyllis Hamilton. They live in West Wyomissing and have three children, a boy and two girls.

EPILOGUE

Since completing my memoirs I have been honored by Albright College with a degree of Doctor of Humanities. Following is a copy of the citation read by Dean Walton presenting me to Dr. Harry V. Masters, president of the college, who conferred the degree.

For a life given to learning the mysteries and majesty of music highlighted by a quadrennium of study in the Royal Conservatory of Dresden, Germany.

For his dedication to the dissemination of culture through the medium of musical talent.

For his contribution to his community through a full half-century of presentation of the Haage concerts — a musical sequence uninterrupted even by the emergencies of war and depression, a presentation which has given Reading a national reputation.

For his untiring leadership in the realm of music in the many civic, social and religious organizations with which he has been actively affiliated for over fifty years.

For his conviction and guidance in the Interfaith Movement of our nation, in which organization he has been one of the three local co-chairmen since its inception.

We of Albright today pay homage to a worthy native of Reading and Berks.

Therefore, Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that, upon the recommendation of the Trustees and Faculty of Albright College, I present

GEORGE D. HAAGE

to receive the honorary degree of

DOCTOR OF HUMANITIES

MY 50TH ANNIVERSARY SERIES

It is quite fitting that I should bring my Memoirs to a close by announcing the attractions for this eventful year, 1957-58. First, the ever-popular BALLET Russe de Monte Carlo, on October 21, to be followed by the PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, William Steinberg conducting, on November 11. The second appearance of this outstanding orchestra, will be most eagerly awaited by all music lovers. On December 4, FRANCES MAGNES that very fine violinist will return, assisted by our own David Garvey, pianist who has attained a world-wide reputation in his chosen field as Piano-Accompanist.

We here are justly proud of David as our Musical Ambassador, and David is most happy for the opportunity to be a part of this 50th anniversary celebration.

The world-famous VIENNA CHOIR BOYS will also return on January 6 to share the year with us. The boys will again present a program of early liturgical music, folk songs, and one of their operatic productions which always prove so delightful and entertaining. The season comes to a close on February 24, when ELEANOR STEBER the famous opera star of the Metropolitan Opera Company will appear for the first time before a local audience. She is equally famous on Radio and TV, and one of the leading recitalists of the present day.

Steber was ill. George London was a most welcome substitute

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